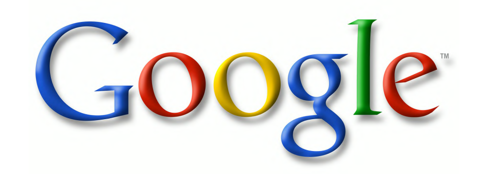


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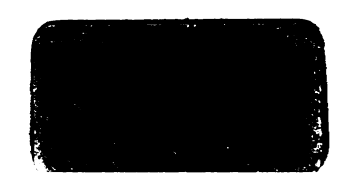
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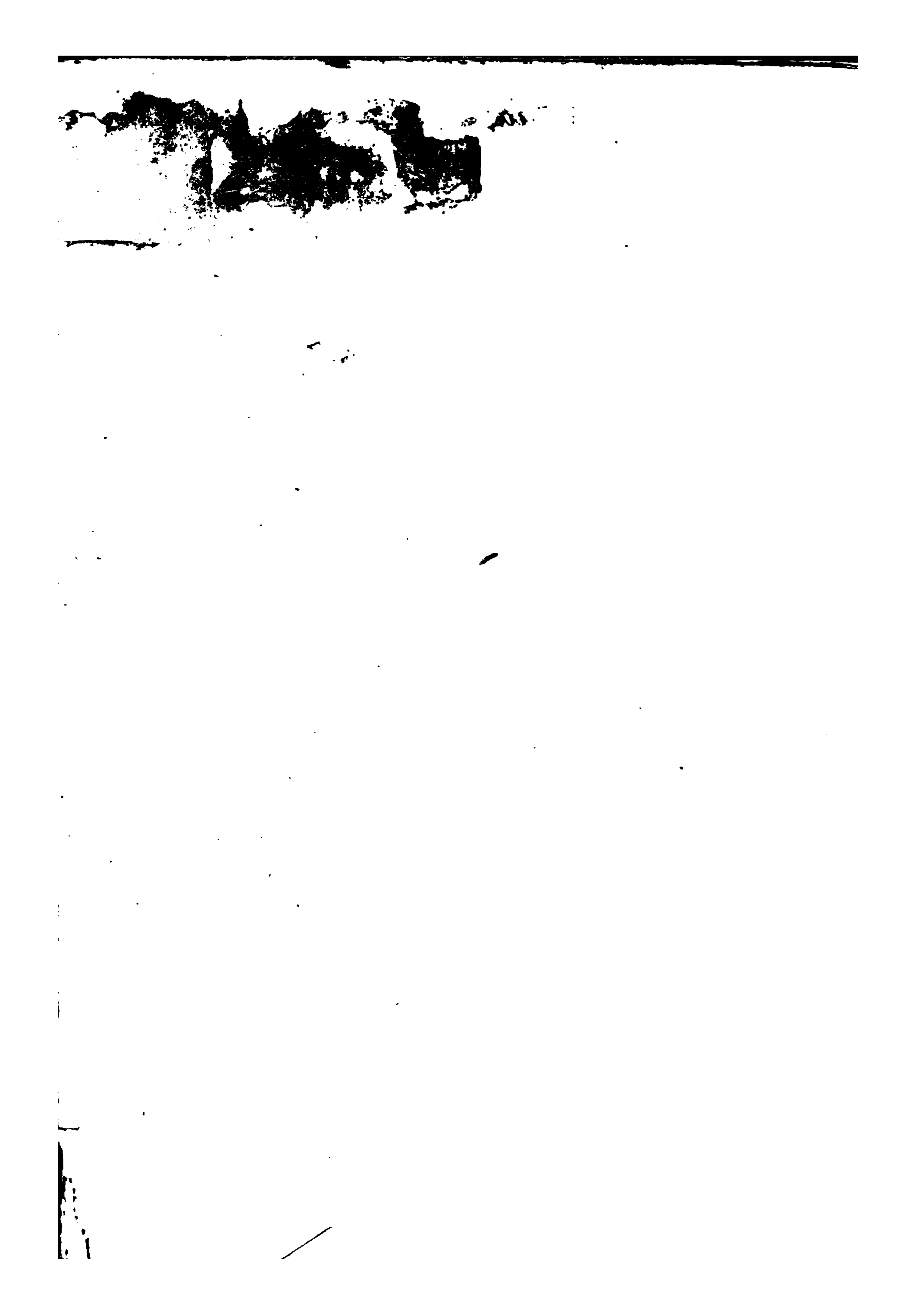
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JOHN MILTON

L'ALLEGRO, IL PENSEROSO, COMUS, AND LYCIDAS

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JOHN MILTON'S

L'ALLEGRO, IL PENSEROSO, COMUS, AND LYCIDAS

EDITED

WITH NOTES AND INTRODUCTIONS

BY

WILLIAM P. TRENT, M.A.

PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH IN THE UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH



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PREFACE

In this edition of selected minor poems of Milton I have endeavored to keep clearly in mind the purpose for which it is primarily intended, that of providing proper materials for the careful study, under the immediate direction of a teacher, of one of the English Classics prescribed by the uniform requirements in English which have been generally adopted by our colleges. In other words, I have endeavored to furnish an apparatus of Introductions and Notes which, in the hands of competent teachers, may be useful in fostering and developing the literary appreciation of the pupil. I have chosen to point out the poetic beauty of an epithet rather than to discuss its etymology, and to trace the genesis of the category of literature to which a poem belongs rather than to dwell upon a point of historical grammar. I have tried, too, to interest the pupil in the interpretation of disputed passages, and to enable him to follow the transmission of thought and expression from poet to poet and from age to age by means of abundant, but, I trust, not too diffuse quotation.

To avoid confusion, the introductory matter relating to each of the poems has been placed directly before it. I had intended to prefix to the volume a biographical sketch of Milton, but several reasons have induced me to abandon my purpose. The main design of the book is to aid in the study of Milton's work rather than in that of his life. The latter line of inquiry, scarcely less valuable in itself, can be most readily followed by the young student in another volume of this series, Mr. Croswell's edition of Macaulay's Essay on Milton. I need hardly add that I have drawn

freely upon previous editors, giving them credit where it seemed proper to do so. I have, too, made use of several editions in the endeavor to obtain a correct and reasonably punctuated text, and I have tried by the use of accents to help the pupil in the pronunciation of unfamiliar proper names and in the sounding of syllables that are necessary to the correct reading of the verses.

W. P. T.

SEWANEE, TENN., September, 1895.

CONTENTS

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

THE following remarks are to be taken strictly as suggestions based on several years' experience in teaching, rather than as dogmatic utterances about one of the most difficult problems that have ever confronted the educator—how to teach literature, especially poetry, in such a manner that the pupil shall not merely be grounded in the external facts relating to an author and his work, not merely be informed as to the relations of the work studied to the general body of literature, but also be brought into intelligent sympathy with the spirit of the author and of his literary creation. For this last, it must always be remembered, is the highest and truest aim of the teacher of literature, and because it is an aim most difficult of attainment, not a few thoughtful men, like the late historian Freeman, have seriously doubted whether literature could be taught at all, and have opposed the establishment of university chairs devoted to its study. Although these men are wrong, and although literature can be and is taught successfully, it is not well to minimize the difficulties of the problem, and these difficulties should surely protect us from all dogmatism on the subject, whether it be our own or that of others. On one point alone may we venture to be dogmatic, and that is that the successful teacher of literature must love his work and be full of his subject. Premising these requisites in the teacher, we may now devote ourselves to a consideration of the steps by which a young student may perhaps best be introduced to the works of a great poet presented for his study in a volume like this.

I. Whenever it is practicable the whole poem should be read *aloud*, both by the pupil out of school and by the class or the teacher during the recitation hour, before the work of minute study is begun. This reading as a whole is necessary, not merely to give the student a general idea of what he is about, but also to give him an intelligent interest in what the poet is about. It is fortunate that all four of the poems given in this volume can be thus read, with perhaps the exception of "Comus," in the class-room. The poems should be read aloud to bring out the full beauty of rhythm and rhyme, on which poetic charm so much depends. All poetry was once chanted or recited, and although it is not necessary now to declaim it or to sing-song it, it is necessary to read it aloud in order thoroughly to enjoy it or comprehend it.

II. When the pupil has read the poem once in this way, he should read the introductory note carefully, and the teacher may assign this note, or part of it, for the next recitation, using his own discretion as to the facts or opinions to which the pupil's attention should be specially drawn, and adding such details or comments as he may think advisable. The fuller the teacher's own reading has been, the more valuable this portion of the work will become to the pupil, for the limits of a text-book preclude the possibility of any introductory note beginning to exhaust the subject.

III. Having read the poem as a whole, and having gained some knowledge of how it came to be written, and what ideas and feelings it is intended to express, the pupil will be prepared to pay attention to details of diction, metre, etc., as well as to study the evolved structure of the poet's work of art. In other words, he will be prepared to use the notes. Here the teacher's own experience and the needs of the class must help him to determine the length of lesson to be given. A certain portion of the text should be assigned and the pupil held responsible for a thorough understanding of it from all

reasonable points of view. He should be called upon to explain the connotation of any word, the structure of any verse, the force of any figure of speech, the meaning of any literary or historical allusion, and the bearing of any idea or passage upon the poem as a whole. Nor should the truth of an idea to nature or human life be overlooked. Obviously no body of notes can cover such a number of points. The notes, therefore, must be looked upon merely as helps to the complete analysis of the poem. When the pupil finds himself to be ignorant of a point which seems important, but about which the notes are silent, he should modestly assume some special ignorance on his own part and try to obtain the required information from a dictionary or other work of reference. Should he fail in this, he should consult his teacher. Of course, an editor sometimes omits a note because he does not conceive that a difficulty will arise, sometimes because he wishes to give the pupil the discipline of research in his own behalf. No conscientious editor will shirk a passage or word because of its difficulty, and when a note is given in tentative language both teacher and pupil should endeavor to master the editor's reasons for failing to pronounce an opinion, and should be content to leave the passage doubtful, unless they are very clear that they have obtained light on the subject that warrants the formation of a positive opinion. Nothing is worse for teacher or pupil than to form hasty and crude opinions about points that have long baffled conscientious scholars. Servile following of any editor is not recommended, but modesty and careful reflection and study are always desirable. As to the notes themselves, some will naturally be found more important than others. Those of an etymological nature may be stressed or not, according to the teacher's judgment. Those discussing the various interpretations that have been proposed for a passage should be especially studied, because they may give rise to interesting discussion. Those that refer to parallel passages in Milton's

other poems should be followed up, because to do this is to render one's self more familiar with the works of the poet one is studying. Those that refer to other English poets should receive as much consideration as is practicable, while with regard to those referring to works in foreign languages the teacher should give general directions according to the character of his class. If the student is at the same time studying Horace, and has previously studied Virgil, he should be rigorously required to trace the references to these poets; and this is, of course, true with regard to Greek and other languages. The notes are made as full as the limits of the volume will allow, in order that pupils of all kinds may be helped. It is by no means meant that every bit of information should be appropriated by each student, for this is sometimes impossible, owing to lack of library facilities and to other causes.

IV. The teacher should be careful not to assume that his pupils are fully acquainted with the meaning of the many technical literary terms used perforce without explanation in such a book as this. He should, therefore, by talks or special lectures, or by reference to books or articles, make sure that the pupil has a fair idea of the nature of poetry in general, of the different varieties of poetry, of the various kinds of rhymes and metres, etc. Many pupils in our schools, and even many students in our universities, are shockingly ignorant about such matters, and it would be well if every teacher were to begin his classes in literature with a few lectures by way of *Prolegomena*.

V. The student should, of course, be expected to do what outside reading he can with regard to Milton and his times, nor should the teacher neglect to connect his treatment of any special author with the literary history of England or America, or of other countries. The teacher, therefore, should read far more than the pupil can be expected to do, and the well read instructor will al-

ways be his pupil's best bibliography. It may, however, be well to conclude these suggestions with a list of books that cannot fail to be useful to any student of Milton.

The chief authority for the events of Milton's life is Professor David Masson's monumental treatise, in six volumes, which is accurately described in its title, "The Life of John Milton; Narrated in Connection with the Political, Ecclesiastical, and Literary History of his Time." Of biographical sketches and monographs, there has been a portentous number, out of which Keightley's, Mark Pattison's, Stopford Brooke's, and Dr. Garnett's (which has a good bibliography) may be selected for reference. Pattison's, in the English Men of Letters Series, is in nearly every respect a model of what a biographical study of a great writer should be, save for its neglect of the political side of Milton's career. This defect does not attach to the admirable life furnished to the Great Writers Series, by Dr. Richard Garnett, who, in addition to his marked critical ability, has the advantage that a poet always has in dealing with a great master of his art. Of criticism of Milton's work there has been no end since the days of Dryden and Addison. It will be sufficient to mention here Dr. Johnson's "Life," and the well-known essays of such critics as Macaulay, Landor, and Matthew Arnold. The poetical works themselves have appeared in numerous editions, of which we may mention, as perhaps most convenient, the "Globe" by Professor Masson, the "Aldine" by Dr. Bradshaw, and the "Eversley" by Professor Masson again, in one, two, and three volumes respectively.

SPECIMEN EXAMINATION PAPERS

THE following papers are intended to suggest to teachers and pupils typical points that should, in the editor's opinion, be stressed in studying a text-book like the present. Each examination should occupy the average student from an hour to an hour and a half. A longer examination can, of course, be prepared by a judicious combination of questions, but it is to be hoped that the day of exhausting examinations is over. The questions in the first paper are of a general nature, those in the second of a special nature; the third combines the two kinds of questions.

I.

1. Discuss briefly Milton's literary obligations, as far as they can be traced, in *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso.*

2. Give a concise description of what a masque was.

3. Do you agree, or not, with the critics who discover no deep personal feeling in *Lycidas?* Give reasons for your answer.

4. How do you interpret the poet's relation to the speakers in *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso?* Is he describing two men different from himself, or two men with one of whom he may be more or less identified, or is he describing two moods of one and the same character, and is that character his own?

5. What, in your opinion, is the most dramatic scene in *Comus?* Give reasons for your answer.

6. Describe briefly the circumstances that led to the composition of *Lycidas* and give details about its publication.

II.

1. Interpret the infinitive "to come" in *L'Allegro,* l. 45.

2. Give modern English equivalents of the words in *L'Allegro,* l. 71, *i.e.,* paraphrase the verse.

3. Comment on the expression "rain influence" in *L'Allegro,* l. 122.

4. What is the biblical reference suggested by *Il Penseroso,* ll. 51–54 ?

5. What is the literary reference suggested by *Il Penseroso,* ll. 110–115 ?

6. In *Comus,* l. 48, explain the grammatical construction of the entire verse.

7. What picture is suggested by the simile in *Comus,* ll. 189–190 ?

8. Explain "leans" in *Comus,* l. 355.

9. Who was Leucothea (*Comus,* l. 875) ?

10. Comment on the meaning of "once more" in *Lycidas,* l. 1.

11. Who was Hippotadès (*Lycidas,* l. 96)?

12. Does "Angel" in *Lycidas,* l. 163, refer to Saint Michael or to Lycidas ? Give reasons for your answer.

III.

1. Give one or two instances in *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* of Milton's inaccuracy of natural description. Does it matter much ?

2. Discuss the meaning of *Il Penseroso,* ll. 147–150.

3. Name the chief poets and others who co-operated to make the Jacobean masque a success.

4. What literary use had been made of the god Comus before Milton's day ?

5. What poem and poet was Milton most affected by in the latter portion of *Comus?*

6. What was the chief external source of influence upon the metrical structure of *Lycidas?*

7. Explain "scrannel" in *Lycidas,* l. 124.

8. Trace briefly the evolution of the pastoral elegy.

9. Did you really enjoy reading *Lycidas?* If so, why ?

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE.

MILTON'S CHIEF WORKS.	CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE.	CONTEMPORARY BIOGRAPHY.
1608. [Milton born.]	1608. Shakspere, Coriolanus (?); Beaumont and Fletcher (?), Philaster.	1608. Fuller, Clarendon born; Sackville died.
	1609. Shakspere, Sonnets.	1609. Suckling born.
	1610. Shakspere, Tempest; G. Fletcher, Christ's Victory, etc.; Chapman, Iliad (I.-XII.); J. Fletcher, Faithful Shepherdess.	
	1611. King James Version of Bible completed.	
		1612. Butler, Montrose born.
	1613. W. Browne, Britannia's Pastorals (Part I.).	1613. Cleveland, Jer. Taylor, Crashaw (?) born.
	1614. Raleigh, History of the World.	1614. H. More born.
		1615. Baxter, Denham born.
	1616. Drummond, Poems; Jonson, First Folio; Webster, Duchess of Malfi (acted).	1616. Shakspere, F. Beaumont died.
		1618. Lovelace, Cowley born; Raleigh, Sylvester died.
		1619. Daniel died.
	1620. Bacon, Novum Organum.	
	1621. Burton, Anatomy of Melancholy.	1621. Marvell born.
	1622. Drayton, Polyolbion (complete); Wither, Mistress of Philarete.	1622. Vaughan born.
	1623. Shakspere, First Folio.	1623. G. Fletcher died.
1624. [Milton at Cambridge, 1624–32. Some English and most of his Latin poetry written during this period.]		
	1625. Bacon, Essays (final form).	1625. James I., Lodge, J. Fletcher died.
	1626. Sandys, Ovid.	1626. Bacon died.
		1628. Bunyan born.
1629. Ode on Christ's Nativity (written).		
1631. Epitaph on Marchioness of Winchester. L'Allegro and Il Penseroso (written?).	1631. G. Herbert, The Temple.	1631. Drayton, Donne died; Dryden born.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE—*Continued.*

Milton's Chief Works.	Contemporary Literature.	Contemporary Biography.
1632. Epitaph on Shakspere (published).		1632. Locke born.
1633. Arcades (written ?).	1633. Donne, Poems; Massinger, New Way to Pay Old Debts (?); P. Fletcher, Purple Island; Prynne, Histriomastix.	1633. G. Herbert died.
1634. Comus (acted).	1634. Habington, Castara.	1634. Chapman died.
	1635. Quarles, Emblems.	
1637. A Mask [Comus], Lycidas.		1637. Ben Jonson died.
1638–39. [Milton in Italy.]		
1639. Epitaphium Damonis (written).		1639. Sir H. Wotton, Carew (?) died.
	1640. Carew, Poems; Suckling, Ballad of a Wedding.	1640. Burton, Massinger, Ford died; Wycherley born.
1641. Five theological pamphlets.	1641. Denham, Cooper's Hill.	
	1642. Sir T. Browne, Religio Medici; Hobbes, De Cive.	1642. Newton, Mrs. Behn born; Suckling (?) died.
1643. Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce.		1643. Sandys, Cartwright died.
1644. Of Education, Areopagitica, and more divorce pamphlets.		1644. Quarles died.
1645. (Minor) Poems.	1645. Waller, Poems.	1645. W. Browne died.
	1646. Vaughan, Poems; Shirley, Poems.	
	1647. Cowley, Mistress.	1647. Rochester born.
	1648. Herrick, Hesperides.	1648. Lord Herbert of Cherbury died.
1649. Political pamphlets; Eikonoklastes.	1649. Lovelace, Lucasta.	1649. Drummond died; Charles I. executed.
	1650. Baxter, Saints' Everlasting Rest; Taylor, Holy Living.	1650. P. Fletcher, Montrose, Crashaw (?) died.
1651. Pro populo Anglicano defensio contra Salmasium.	1651. Hobbes, Leviathan; Davenant, Gondibert.	1651. Otway born.
	1653. Walton, Complete Angler.	
1654. Defensio Secunda.	1654. Hobbes, Of Liberty.	1654. Habington (?) died.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE—*Concluded.*

MILTON'S CHIEF WORKS.	CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE.	CONTEMPORARY BIOGRAPHY.
1655. Pro se defensio contra A. Morum.	1655. Fuller, Church History.	1658. Cromwell, Lovelace, Cleveland died.
1659. Two ecclesiastical pamphlets.	1659. Cleveland, Poems.	
1660. Ready and easy way to establish a free Commonwealth.	1660. Pepys' Diary begun; Dryden, Astræa Redux.	1660. Charles II. restored. 1661. Fuller died; Defoe born.
	1663. Butler, Hudibras (Part I.).	1664. Prior born. 1666. Shirley died.
1667. Paradise Lost.	1667. Dryden, Essay of Dramatic Poesy.	1667. Cowley, Wither, Jer. Taylor died; Swift born. 1668. Davenant, Denham died.
1669. Accidence.	1669. Dryden, Tyrannic Love.	1669. Prynne died.
1670. History of Britain.		1670. Congreve born.
1671. Paradise Regained; Samson Agonistes (published together).	1671. Buckingham, The Rehearsal.	
1672. Artis Logicæ, etc.		1672. Addison, Steele born.
1673. Of true Religion, etc.		
1674. Epistolarum familiarum liber.[1]	1674. Dryden, The State of Innocence (founded on Paradise Lost).	1674. Herrick, Clarendon died.

[1] Chief posthumous works:
1697 and 1698. Prose Works.
1743. Original Letters and Papers of State Addressed to Oliver Cromwell.
1825. De Doctrina Christiana.
1876. Common Place Book.

L'ALLEGRO

[The genesis of "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso," perhaps the best known and most heartily admired of all Milton's compositions, is involved in considerable obscurity. They were not printed before 1645, and they do not exist for us in manuscript; we are therefore compelled to rely upon inferences and internal evidence in determining their time and place of writing. The consensus of critical opinion gives 1632–33 as the time, and Horton as the place. Professor Masson assigns them to the latter half of 1632. There are, however, reasons that incline me to think that they should probably be placed earlier. The autumn of 1632 seems to be selected because Horton is usually assumed as the place of composition, and Milton went to reside there in July, 1632. He would naturally, argue the critics, be so impressed with the charms of the spot that he would turn to verse, and "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso" and the "Song on May Morning" (1633?) would be the outcome. But there is no proof that the poems were not written at Cambridge or in London as reminiscential tributes to the pleasures of a vacation spent in the country; and we know from a Latin prolusion or oration delivered, Masson thinks, either in the latter half of 1631 or the first part of 1632, that Milton spent "the last past summer . . . amid rural scenes and sequestered glades," and that he recalled "the supreme delight *he* had with the Muses." This vacation of 1631 may have been spent at Horton, for there is no proof that the elder Milton had not then acquired that property, and the young poet may have written his poems under the elms that so fascinated him, or have composed them on his return to college. I incline to the former supposition. As we shall see, he was unquestionably supplied with hints for both his poems by Burton's "Anatomy," surely a book for a student like Milton to take with him on a vacation. Again, no one can read the "Prolusion on Early Rising," almost certainly Milton's, without thinking that much of the raw material of the two poems was in his brain and being expressed during his university life; nor can one read the other prolusions without seeing that Orpheus, the music of the spheres, and Platonism were filling much of his thoughts. Besides, about 1630 Milton was evidently to some extent occupied with Shakspere, whose genius is hon-

ored in the poems, and a year later he was experimenting with the octosyllabic couplet in the "Epitaph on the Marchioness of Winchester." Finally, it was about this time that he was seriously weighing the reasons *pro* and *con* with regard to his choice of a profession, and it might naturally occur to him to contrast in poetic form the pleasures of the more or less worldly and the more or less secluded, studious, and devoted life. He had made his choice by the autumn of 1632, and had therefore less cause for such poetical expression. A minute analysis of the diction and metre of the poems tends to confirm the view here expressed.

It has already been stated that Milton was indebted for hints, if not for direct suggestion, to Burton's "Anatomy of Melancholy." This famous book, of which the first edition appeared in 1621, was prefaced by a poem entitled "The Author's Abstract of Melancholy, Διαλογῶς," in which "Democritus Junior" analyzes his feelings in a way that foreshadows Milton's subsequent procedure. There are twelve stanzas of eight lines each, the last two verses of each stanza constituting a variable refrain, the measure being, however, the octosyllabic couplet. In one stanza the pleasures of a meditative man are given in a series of little pictures, while the next stanza opposes the woes of the same personage when a fit of real melancholy is upon him. Milton could not have failed to be struck with the general effectiveness of the idea and its development, but his artist's instinct told him that this effectiveness would be enhanced if, instead of a dialogue in stanzas, he should write two distinct but companion poems, developed on parallel lines, in which the pleasures of a typically cheerful and a typically serious man should be described in pictures slightly more elaborate than those of Burton. He abandoned the too glaring contrast of joys and woes, and succeeded also in avoiding the occasional dropping into commonplace that mars the "Abstract of Melancholy." But, as is pointed out in the notes, some pictures and even lines and phrases of the elder poem probably remained in his memory.

Another poem which may have influenced Milton is the song, "Hence, all you vain delights," in Fletcher's play, "The Nice Valour." This play was not published until 1647, but it had been acted long before, and the song had almost certainly become known before "Il Penseroso" was written. Tradition assigns the lyric to Beaumont, but Mr. Bullen with more probability gives it to Fletcher. It is an exquisite expansion of the theme expressed in its closing verse, "Nothing's so dainty-sweet as lovely melancholy," and it is pleasant to believe that it may have given Milton a hint, although it can scarcely have had as much influence upon his verses as his own two poems plainly had upon a stanza of Collins's "The Passions." There are naturally traces of other poets to be found in these productions of Milton's impression-

able period, particularly of Joshua Sylvester, the portentous translator of Du Bartas, and to a less degree of Spenser, Browne, and Marlowe; but this fact has been pointed out in the notes wherever it seemed necessary. Collins, too, was not the only eighteenth-century poet who had "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso" ringing through his head, as anyone can see who will take the trouble to examine Dodsley's well-known collection. Even Pope was not above borrowing epithets from them, and Dyer's best poem, "Grongar Hill," would not have had its being without them. Green, Thomas Warton, John Hughes, who actually wrote a new conclusion for "Il Penseroso," and other minor verse-writers were much affected by them, and Gray borrowed from them with the open boldness that always marks the appropriations of a true poet. But perhaps the best proof of their popularity during a century which is too sweepingly charged with inability to appreciate true poetry, is the fact that Handel set them to music. In our own century they have never lacked admirers, or failed to exert upon poets an easily detected influence. It may even be held with some show of reason that their popularity, leading to a fuller knowledge of Milton, paved the way for the remarkable renascence of Spenser in the latter half of the eighteenth and the first part of the present century.

As their Italian titles imply, the subjects or speakers of Milton's verses are The Cheerful Man and The Thoughtful (Meditative) Man respectively. Our English adjectives do not quite adequately render the Italian they are intended to translate, which is perhaps the reason why Milton went abroad for his titles, since he had a striking warning before him in Burton's "Abstract" of the ambiguity attaching to such a word as "Melancholy," which he might have used with one of his poems without exciting surprise. He has excited surprise with some modern critics through the fact that he wrote *Penseroso* instead of *Pensieroso*, but it has been shown that the form he used was correct and current when he wrote. His Italian titles, however, have not prevented much discussion as to the characters he intended to portray. Critics are quite unanimously of the opinion that Il Penseroso represents a man very like the Milton we know, but they are divided as to the kind of man typified by L'Allegro. One editor goes so far as to say that Milton "must have felt that the character of L'Allegro might, with slight changes or additions, be made to typify the careless, pleasure-seeking spirit of the Cavaliers and Court; the spirit which he afterwards figured in Comus and his followers, and condemned to destruction." If this view be correct, one is forced to conclude that Milton had more of the true dramatist's power of creating characters other than himself than he has generally been supposed to possess; and it requires us to conceive the more sprightly poem as forming a hard mechanical contrast to its companion, which is the reverse of

poetical. On the other hand, Dr. Garnett maintains that the two poems "are complementary rather than contrary, and may be, in a sense, regarded as one poem, whose theme is the praise of the reasonable life." It is easy to agree with this view, especially as Burton's poem obviously suggested the idea of contrasting two well-marked moods of one individual character rather than of bringing into juxtaposition two radically different characters. L'Allegro may not be the Milton who meditated entering the Church and making his life a true poem, but he is rather the Milton who went to the theatre in his youth and could in his mature age ask Lawrence

"What neat repast shall feast us, light and choice,
Of Attic taste with wine, whence we may rise
To hear the lute well touched or artful voice
Warble immortal notes and Tuscan air?"

than the typical Cavalier of Charles's court. Cavaliers did not usually call for "sweet Liberty" but for sweet License, nor did they greatly hanker after "unreprovèd pleasures." They were not particularly noted for their early rising, and if any one of them had watched the Bear out, in different pursuits from those of Il Penseroso, he would probably not have continued his morning walk after encountering the "milk-maid singing blithe."

Another point on which critics differ is whether or not Milton intended to describe the events of a day of twenty-four hours. Some claim that he merely sketches the general tenor of the life of his characters; others that he represents the events of an ideal day. The antagonists ought to be satisfied with the assurance that he intended to do both the one thing and the other. The careful and sequential division of the day that is apparent in each poem (even if "Il Penseroso" does begin with the nightingale and the moon) cannot be accidental, nor can the grouping of events and natural sights belonging to different seasons of the year be the result of ignorance or negligence.

I am not sure that it is not a fad of criticism to call as much attention as editors do to the fact that Milton was not so accurate or so penetrating an observer of nature as some of his successors, like Tennyson, have been. In the first place, Milton will not be found to be much of a sinner in this regard if he be compared with his predecessors and contemporaries. In the second place, it is by no means certain that minute and accurate observation of nature is essential to the equipment of a great poet. A genuine love of Nature, a power to feel and impart something of her spirit, is doubtless essential; but as poetry on its pictorial side should be mainly suggestive, it is not yet clear that posterity will get more pleasure out of the elaborate and

accurate pictures of some modern poets than out of the suggestive, if sometimes inaccurate, pictures of Milton. It is not entirely unlikely that our recently developed love of detail-work has injured our sense for form, and that our grandchildren will take Mr. Arnold's advice and return to the Greeks and Milton, in order to learn what the highest poetry really is like. Milton is nearer akin to Homer and Sophocles than he is to the modern naturalist or nature-mystic, and it is well for English poetry that he is. He would probably have thought the picture of the sunbeams lying in the golden chamber, suggested by a few words in that exquisite fragment of Mimnermus beginning "Αἰήταο πόλιν," more in keeping with the requirements of a rational poetics than nine-tenths of the purple descriptive passages in English poetry since the days of Wordsworth.

But if editors and critics have had their humors and fads, they have always ended by acknowledging the perennial charm of these poems. And the mass of readers has paid its highest tribute of culling many a phrase and verse for quotation to charm the outer or the inner ear. The anthologist of our lyric poetry who should omit them from his collection would pay dearly for his indiscretion, and yet he could argue fairly that they are rather idylls than true lyrics, as Wordsworth did long since. But if they are, in fact, a series of little pictures sometimes so loosely joined or so hastily sketched as to puzzle the careful critic, these have been so fused into one organic whole by the delicate, evanescent sentiment that pervades each poem that even the purist will be willing to admit them to be lyrics of marvellous beauty and power, coming from the heart of the poet and going straight to the hearts of his readers.]

HENCE, loathèd Melancholy,
  Of Cerberus and blackest Midnight born
In Stygian cave forlorn
  'Mongst horrid shapes, and shrieks, and sights unholy!
Find out some uncouth cell,
  Where brooding Darkness spreads his jealous wings,
And the night-raven sings;—
  There, under ebon shades and low-browed rocks,
As ragged as thy locks,
  In dark Cimmerian desert ever dwell.
But come, thou Goddess fair and free,
In heaven yclept Euphrosynè,
And by men heart-easing Mirth;

Whom lovely Venus, at a birth,
With two sister Graces more,
To ivy-crownèd Bacchus bore :
Or whether (as some sages sing)
The frolic wind that breathes the spring,
Zephyr, with Aurora playing,
As he met her once a-Maying,
There, on beds of violets blue,
And fresh-blown roses washed in dew,
Filled her with thee, a daughter fair,
So buxom, blithe, and debonair.
Haste thee, Nymph, and bring with thee
Jest, and youthful Jollity,
Quips and Cranks and wanton Wiles,
Nods and Becks and wreathèd Smiles,
Such as hang on Hebè's cheek,
And love to live in dimple sleek ;
Sport that wrinklèd Care derides,
And Laughter holding both his sides.
Come, and trip it, as you go,
On the light fantastic toe ;
And in thy right hand lead with thee
The mountain nymph, sweet Liberty ;
And, if I give thee honor due,
Mirth, admit me of thy crew,
To live with her and live with thee,
In unreprovèd pleasures free ;
To hear the lark begin his flight,
And, singing, startle the dull night,
From his watch-tower in the skies,
Till the dapplèd dawn doth rise ;
Then to come, in spite of sorrow,
And at my window bid good-morrow,
Through the sweet-briar or the vine,
Or the twisted eglantine ;
While the cock, with lively din,
Scatters the rear of darkness thin,

And to the stack, or the barn door,
Stoutly struts his dames before :
Oft listening how the hounds and horn
Cheerly rouse the slumbering morn,
From the side of some hoar hill,
Through the high wood echoing shrill :
Sometime walking, not unseen,
By hedgerow elms, on hillocks green,
Right against the eastern gate
Where the great Sun begins his state,
Robed in flames and amber light,
The clouds in thousand liveries dight ;
While the plowman, near at hand,
Whistles o'er the furrowed land,
And the milkmaid singeth blithe,
And the mower whets his scythe,
And every shepherd tells his tale
Under the hawthorn in the dale.
Straight mine eye hath caught new pleasures,
Whilst the landskip round it measures :
Russet lawns and fallows gray,
Where the nibbling flocks do stray ;
Mountains on whose barren breast
The laboring clouds do often rest ;
Meadows trim, with daisies pied ;
Shallow brooks and rivers wide ;
Towers and battlements it sees
Bosomed high in tufted trees,
Where perhaps some beauty lies,
The cynosure of neighboring eyes.
Hard by, a cottage chimney smokes
From betwixt two aged oaks,
Where Corydon and Thyrsis met
Are at their savory dinner set
Of herbs and other country messes,
Which the neat-handed Phyllis dresses ;
And then in haste her bower she leaves,

With Thestylis to bind the sheaves;
Or, if the earlier season lead,
To the tanned haycock in the mead.
Sometimes, with secure delight,
The upland hamlets will invite,
When the merry bells ring round,
And the jocund rebecks sound
To many a youth, and many a maid,
Dancing in the checkered shade;
And young and old come forth to play
On a sunshine holiday,
Till the livelong daylight fail.
Then to the spicy nut-brown ale,
With stories told of many a feat,
How Faery Mab the junkets eat.
She was pinched and pulled, she said;
And he, by Friar's lantern led;
Tells how the drudging goblin sweat
To earn his cream bowl duly set,
When in one night, ere glimpse of morn,
His shadowy flail hath threshed the corn
That ten day-laborers could not end;
Then lies him down the lubber fiend,
And, stretched out all the chimney's length,
Basks at the fire his hairy strength,
And cropful out of doors he flings,
Ere the first cock his matin rings.
Thus done the tales, to bed they creep,
By whispering winds soon lulled asleep.
Tow'rèd cities please us then,
And the busy hum of men,
Where throngs of knights and barons bold,
In weeds of peace, high triumphs hold,
With store of ladies, whose bright eyes
Rain influence, and judge the prize
Of wit or arms, while both contend
To win her grace whom all commend.

There let Hymen oft appear,
In saffron robe, with taper clear,
And pomp, and feast, and revelry,
With mask and antique pageantry;
Such sights as youthful poets dream
On summer eves by haunted stream.
Then to the well-trod stage anon,
If Jonson's learnèd sock be on,
Or sweetest Shakspere, Fancy's child,
Warble his native wood-notes wild.
And ever, against eating cares,
Lap me in soft Lydian airs,
Married to immortal verse,
Such as the meeting soul may pierce,
In notes with many a winding bout
Of linkèd sweetness long drawn out
With wanton heed and giddy cunning,
The melting voice through mazes running,
Untwisting all the chains that tie
The hidden soul of harmony;
That Orpheus' self may heave his head
From golden slumber on a bed
Of heaped Elysian flowers, and hear
Such strains as would have won the ear
Of Pluto to have quite set free
His half-regained Eurydicè.
These delights if thou canst give,
Mirth, with thee I mean to live.

IL PENSEROSO

Hence, vain deluding Joys,
  The brood of Folly without father bred!
How little you bested,
  Or fill the fixèd mind with all your toys!
Dwell in some idle brain,
  And fancies fond with gaudy shapes possess,
As thick and numberless
  As the gay motes that people the sunbeams,
Or likest hovering dreams,
  The fickle pensioners of Morpheus' train.
But, hail! thou Goddess sage and holy!
Hail, divinest Melancholy!
Whose saintly visage is too bright
To hit the sense of human sight,
And therefore to our weaker view
O'erlaid with black, staid Wisdom's hue;
Black, but such as in esteem
Prince Memnon's sister might beseem,
Or that starred Ethiope queen that strove
To set her beauty's praise above
The Sea Nymphs, and their powers offended.
Yet thou art higher far descended:
Thee bright-haired Vesta long of yore
To solitary Saturn bore;
His daughter she; in Saturn's reign
Such mixture was not held a stain.
Oft in glimmering bowers and glades
He met her, and in secret shades
Of woody Ida's inmost grove,
While yet there was no fear of Jove.

Come, pensive Nun, devout and pure,
Sober, steadfast, and demure,
All in a robe of darkest grain,
Flowing with majestic train,
And sable stole of cypress lawn
Over thy decent shoulders drawn.
Come, but keep thy wonted state,
With even step, and musing gait,
And looks commèrcing with the skies,
Thy rapt soul sitting in thine eyes:
There, held in holy passion still,
Forget thyself to marble, till,
With a sad leaden downward cast,
Thou fix them on the earth as fast.
And join with thee calm Peace and Quiet,
Spare Fast, that oft with gods doth diet,
And hears the Muses in a ring
Aye round about Jove's altar sing;
And add to these retirèd Leisure,
That in trim gardens takes his pleasure;
But, first and chiefest, with thee bring
Him that yon soars on golden wing,
Guiding the fiery-wheelèd throne,
The Cherub Contemplatiön;
And the mute Silence hist along,
'Less Philomel will deign a song,
In her sweetest saddest plight,
Smoothing the rugged brow of Night,
While Cynthia checks her dragon yoke
Gently o'er the accustomed oak.
Sweet bird, that shunn'st the noise of folly,
Most musical, most melancholy!
Thee, chauntress, oft the woods among
I woo, to hear thy evensong;
And, missing thee, I walk unseen
On the dry smooth-shaven green,
To behold the wandering moon,

Riding near her highest noon,
Like one that had been led astray
Through the heaven's wide pathless way,
And oft, as if her head she bowed,
Stooping through a fleecy cloud.
Oft, on a plat of rising ground,
I hear the far-off curfew sound,
Over some wide-watered shore,
Swinging slow with sullen roar;
Or, if the air will not permit,
Some still removèd place will fit,
Where glowing embers through the room
Teach light to counterfeit a gloom,
Far from all resort of mirth,
Save the cricket on the hearth,
Or the bellman's drowsy charm
To bless the doors from nightly harm.
Or let my lamp, at midnight hour,
Be seen in some high lonely tower,
Where I may oft outwatch the Bear,
With thrice-great Hermes, or unsphere
The spirit of Plato, to unfold
What worlds or what vast regions hold
The immortal mind that hath forsook
Her mansion in this fleshly nook;
And of those demons that are found
In fire, air, flood, or underground,
Whose power hath a true consent
With planet or with element.
Sometime let gorgeous Tragedy
In sceptred pall come sweeping by,
Presenting Thebes, or Pelops' line,
Or the tale of Troy divine,
Or what (though rare) of later age
Ennoblèd hath the buskined stage.
But, O sad Virgin! that thy power
Might raise Musæus from his bower;

Or bid the soul of Orpheus sing
Such notes as, warblèd to the string,
Drew iron tears down Pluto's cheek,
And made Hell grant what love did seek;
Or call up him that left half told
The story of Cambúscan bold,
Of Camball, and of Algarsife,
And who had Canacè to wife,
That owned the virtuous ring and glass,
And of the wondrous horse of brass
On which the Tartar king did ride;
And if aught else great bards beside
In sage and solemn tunes have sung,
Of turneys, and of trophies hung,
Of forests, and enchantments drear,
Where more is meant than meets the ear.
Thus, Night, oft see me in thy pale career,
Till civil-suited Morn appear,
Not tricked and frounced, as she was wont
With the Attic boy to hunt,
But kerchieft in a comely cloud,
While rocking winds are piping loud,
Or ushered with a shower still,
When the gust hath blown his fill,
Ending on the rustling leaves,
With minute-drops from off the eaves.
And, when the sun begins to fling
His flaring beams, me, Goddess, bring
To archèd walks of twilight groves,
And shadows brown, that Sylvan loves,
Of pine, or monumental oak,
Where the rude axe with heavèd stroke
Was never heard the nymphs to daunt,
Or fright them from their hallowed haunt.
There, in close covert, by some brook,
Where no profaner eye may look,
Hide me from day's garish eye,

While the bee with honeyed thigh,
That at her flowery work doth sing,
And the waters murmuring,
With such consort as they keep,
Entice the dewy-feathered Sleep.
And let some strange mysterious dream
Wave at his wings, in airy stream
Of lively portraiture displayed,
Softly on my eyelids laid;
And, as I wake, sweet music breathe
Above, about, or underneath,
Sent by some Spirit to mortals good,
Or the unseen Genius of the wood.
But let my due feet never fail
To walk the studious cloister's pale,
And love the high embowèd roof,
With antique pillars massy proof,
And storied windows richly dight,
Casting a dim religious light.
There let the pealing organ blow,
To the full-voiced quire below,
In service high and anthems clear,
As may with sweetness, through mine ear,
Dissolve me into ecstasies,
And bring all heaven before mine eyes.
And may at last my weary age
Find out the peaceful hermitage,
The hairy gown and mossy cell,
Where I may sit and rightly spell
Of every star that heaven doth shew,
And every herb that sips the dew,
Till old experience do attain
To something like prophetic strain.
These pleasures, Melancholy, give,
And I with thee will choose to live.

COMUS

A MASK

PRESENTED AT LUDLOW CASTLE, 1634,

BEFORE

JOHN, EARL OF BRIDGEWATER,

THEN PRESIDENT OF WALES

THE PERSONS

The ATTENDANT SPIRIT, afterwards in the habit of THYRSIS.
COMUS, with his Crew.
The LADY.
FIRST BROTHER.
SECOND BROTHER.
SABRINA, the Nymph.

The Chief Persons which presented were:
The LORD BRACKLEY.
MR. THOMAS EGERTON, his Brother.
The LADY ALICE EGERTON.

COMUS

[Milton had had some little experience in writing masques before he undertook "Comus," and he must have seen and read not a few. Although we cannot determine the exact date of "Arcades," it is reasonably certain that it preceded "Comus" and that it may be assigned to 1633. It formed only "part of an entertainment presented to the Countess Dowager of Derby at Harefield," but we may be sure that it was a part as important as it was beautiful, and that the poet's prentice hand was strengthened by writing it. He seems to have been induced thus to honor a lady whose praises Spenser had previously sung, by the well-known musician, Henry Lawes, to whom he afterwards dedicated a fine sonnet. Lawes (1595–1662) was the chief English composer of his time and must have known the Milton family for some years. His talents won him a position at court and the friendship of the leading poets of the time, whose songs he set to music, receiving in return their poetical encomiums. He probably gained more money, however, by furnishing music for the then fashionable masques, so we find him collaborating in the performance of Shirley's "Triumph of Peace," and composing single-handed the music of Carew's "Cœlum Britannicum." He was also music tutor to the children of the Earl and Countess of Bridgewater, which seems to explain his assumed connection with "Arcades." These children would take part in the proposed entertainment to their grandmother and would ask their instructor's help. He, knowing Milton well, would apply to him for the necessary verses rather than to professional masque-writers, who would probably not care to undertake such a slight piece of work. Milton's success was so conspicuous that when another and more elaborate entertainment was contemplated by the Bridgewater family, Lawes would again apply to him for poetical assistance. This is a simple, if meagre, account of the way the young Puritan poet was enlisted in the service of the distinguished Cavalier family, for Warton's statement that Milton's father was the Earl's tenant at Horton has not been substantiated.

The occasion of this more elaborate entertainment was the formal entrance of the Earl of Bridgewater upon his duties as Lord President of Wales. He was the son, by a prior marriage, of the late Lord

Keeper Egerton (better known as Baron Ellesmere), who had espoused, as a widower, that Countess Dowager of Derby before whom "Arcades" was performed. Sir John Egerton, the son, married this lady's second daughter, Lady Frances Stanley, thus becoming the Countess's stepson and son-in-law. In 1617 he received his earldom, and in 1631 became President of the Council of Wales and Lord Lieutenant, not merely of North and South Wales, but of the four English counties forming the Welsh Marches. He did not enter on the duties of his office, or at any rate did not go to Wales, until the spring of 1633, and his formal installation was delayed until the fall of the next year. His official seat was the town of Ludlow in Shropshire, and his residence the historic Ludlow Castle, now in ruins, but then kept up in some state. To this castle the Bridgewater clan seems to have gathered by the autumn of 1634, and this fact, together with the prospect of a large concourse of neighboring gentry, would naturally give a particularly festive character to the entertainment proposed. That a masque should be performed was not only in keeping with the times, but was calculated to show off the accomplishments of the President's children * to the best advantage, for his two sons, Lord Brackley and Mr. Thomas Egerton, had in spite of their tender age (the elder was only twelve) taken part the preceding year in Carew's "Cœlum Britannicum" and, probably, in "Arcades." The Lady Alice Egerton, their sister, was slightly their senior and may be presumed to have acted before, at least in "Arcades;" at all events her musical abilities had been trained by Lawes. Additional reasons for the production of a masque may be found in the fact that the hall or other great rooms of the castle would afford an excellent place for its presentation, and in the further fact that a courtier of the Earl's "incomparable parts," to quote his tombstone, would naturally like to inaugurate his rule with a species of entertainment particularly associated with royalty and the upper nobility. But this leads us to inquire what a masque was and what scope it furnished to the poetic genius of the young man without whose aid the great entertainment of Michaelmas night (September 29), 1634, would probably be totally unknown to us.

Etymologically considered, the word "mask" or "masque" takes us as far east as Arabia, for it is derived from the Arabic *maskharat*, a buffoon, through the Spanish *mascara*, a masquerader (Skeat). The notion that the entertainment was called a masque because the performers wore masques or visors seems to have reversed matters entirely. The word has been spelt either *mask* or *masque*, the latter form being of French origin. From an historical point of view, how-

* He seems to have been blessed with fifteen, two-thirds of whom were living in 1634.

ever, neither Arabia, nor Spain, nor France is of much importance to us, the English masque plainly owing more to Italy than to any other country.[1]

According to Mr. Symonds the Italian masque may practically be said to date from the gorgeous ceremonies that attended the marriage of Leonora of Aragon, daughter of King Ferdinand of Naples, with Ercole D'Este, in 1474. When she passed through Rome, Cardinal Pietro Riario entertained her with a regal magnificence and a taste, which, if meretricious, nevertheless gave evidence of the wide-spread effects of the Renaissance—for the very pastry was designed so as to show the histories of Perseus, Atalanta, and Hercules. After a banquet at which this pastry figured, similar histories were represented on the dais by men and women; the men, who impersonated each a Jason, a Theseus, or a Hercules, proceeding at the sound of "fifes and many other instruments . . . to dance and dally with their nymphs" and to beat away certain Centaurs who rushed forth to deprive them of the same. "There was beside," we are told on good authority, "a representation of Bacchus and Ariadne, with many other spectacles of the greatest rarity and most inestimable cost;" but what is more to the point is the evidence that the artistic genius of the times was enlisted in the service of these royal and ecclesiastical merrymakers.

The next similar show of importance took place at Ferrara in 1502, when the notorious Lucrezia Borgia married Alphonso D'Este. On this occasion five comedies of Plautus were played on successive nights, but the audiences doubtless enjoyed the fantastic masques and ballets introduced between the scenes more than they did the dramas themselves. One of these interludes was a masque of Cupid in which the young god "shot arrows and sang madrigals." Here we plainly have the embryo of the masque, as it was afterwards performed at the court of the English James. In 1513 the first representation of Bibbiena's "Calandria" at Urbino was attended by the introduction of similar interludes between the acts of the comedy; but there seems to have been a considerable advance in the splendor and the mechanical ingenuity displayed in the "Moresche" (*cf.* morris-dance. See note to *Comus*, 116), as the interludes were called. A special feature was the introduction of chariots, which shows that these private entertainments had been to some extent amalgamated with the public pageants

[1] In preparing this slight sketch of the fortunes of the English masque I have relied chiefly on Ward's *History of English Dramatic Literature*, Symonds's *Shakspere's Predecessors in the English Drama*, Masson's *Life of Milton* (Vol. I.), Warton's edition of Milton's *Minor Poems*, Swinburne's *Study of Ben Jonson*, Verity's edition of *Comus* (Introduction), and my own reading of the masques themselves.

or triumphs, processional shows which reached their culmination in the Carnivals of Florence. For these pageants such architects as Brunelleschi made large drafts upon their inventive genius, which prepares us to appreciate the part played by Inigo Jones in the staging of the Jacobean masque. After the interlude and the pageant had been combined, there seems to have been practically no limit set to the extravagant magnificence of royal weddings and other such functions, especially in Florence. Mr. Symonds furnishes graphic descriptions of two Florentine marriage festivals as well as of the dazzling and sumptuous entertainments given by the Republic of Venice to the Duke of Anjou, afterwards Henry III. of France; but those who are desirous of further information on the subject must consult his pages, for we are now prepared to consider more specifically the development of the English masque, which, like its Italian prototype, was to give scope to the amateur actor of high birth, to the engineer, the painter, the sculptor, the architect, and the musician, to say nothing of the dancing-master, the dress-maker, and the upholsterer, and finally to the poet, in this respect surpassing anything that Italy had had to boast.

Strictly speaking, the masque did not make its appearance in England until the early part of the sixteenth century; but, as in Italy, there had existed courtly entertainments and public pageants that might in time, one would think, have coalesced into a very similar hybrid performance. There were "disguisings" and "mummings" performed by courtiers and paid servants as early as the reign of Edward III., and while dancing was probably the chief feature of these entertainments, it is likely that there was more or less assuming of characters, allegorical and mythological. A pantomime representing the life of St. George is said to have entertained the Emperor Sigismund when he visited England in 1416, and later there seem to have been companies of actors kept by the kings and chief nobles. There was even an official superintendence of the Court Revels by a personage known as the Abbot of Misrule.

On the other hand, we hear of City Pageants in London before the middle of the thirteenth century. They were mainly fostered by the Trade Guilds, and consisted of a procession of symbolical scenes representing the various trades. Probably the miracle plays and other rude popular performances sufficed to satisfy the dramatic instincts of the crowd, but later on even the City shows took a literary cast, and dramatists like Decker and Peele furnished the necessary speeches. These processions, as Mr. Verity has remarked, were "not so artistic as the Florentine *Trionfi*, not so classical, but essentially akin." The same editor draws attention to the fact that familiarity with them must have stood the masque writers in good stead, and instances Shirley's

"Triumph of Peace," which, though acted at Whitehall, had previously passed through a portion of the City as a pageant. But perhaps as good a way as any to get an idea of what English genius could do in this direction is to compare with a description of one of the chief Florentine shows the elaborate "Part of King James's Entertainment, in Passing to his Coronation," which heads the collection of Ben Jonson's masques. The sprightly grace of the Italians is conspicuous in the latter by its absence, but English solidity is over all.

Now, with royal and private "mummings" and City Pageants and Puritanism still in the distance, it is no wonder that the Italian masque should have found its way to England even before its culmination in Florence. Hall's "Chronicle" gives a brief description of a court masque in which that jovial monarch, Henry VIII., took a hand, to the astonishment, it would seem, of some of the ladies of the court. This was about 1512–13. Some years later it was Cardinal Wolsey who was astonished—an episode that Shakspere has made use of in "Henry VIII." Other entertainments of all sorts, from a Latin satirical play in which Luther and his wife figured to mere morris-dancing, seem to have occupied the court considerably during this reign, and in 1544 a special Master of the Revels was appointed to superintend them, Under Edward VI. much of this levity was suppressed, and licenses were required for the production of plays and interludes even by actors attached to the households of the great nobles. Mary's reign was not quite so antagonistic to the "mummers," but it was not until Elizabeth's time that the masque got a fair chance to develop. She and Leicester were both fond of the stage, but with wise economy the queen preferred to have entertainments given her on her progresses at her subjects' expense. Scott's description of the Kenilworth pageants is, of course, well known. She did, however, despatch a company of masquers to Scotland in 1589 in honor of James's consort, Anne of Denmark, and, as Mr. Verity has noted, the comedies of Lyly which received her patronage were not far removed from masques.

But Elizabeth's reign is not the golden age of the English masque. That honor, such as it is, belongs to her Scotch successor, whose mixed character was naturally appealed to by a hybrid entertainment. James was perfectly willing to lavish his subjects' money on his own pleasures, and if he did not have as great architects and painters as those of Italy to help him spend it, he had at any rate a learned poet to put together scenes that would appeal to his pedantry and flattering verses that would tickle his vanity. He had besides an architect of fine talent in Inigo Jones, who had studied in the school of Palladio, an Italian composer of merit in Ferrabosco, and a good choreograph to arrange the dances and costumes in Thomas Giles. These men labored assiduously and successfully to please their royal master, and other

poets besides Ben Jonson and the lords and ladies of the court, who needed no great ability to do the acting required, seconded well their efforts. Nor did the great nobles fail to vie with one another in giving these costly entertainments whenever a wedding or a royal visit furnished a proper occasion, and even the grave lawyers of the Inns of the Court were eager to win distinction and the king's favor by the flattering extravagance of pageants at which many a grim Puritan burgher must have cast glances of wonder and indignation. Mr. Symonds has collected some interesting figures bearing on this extravagance which make us sympathize a little with the Puritan. Ben Jonson's "Masque of Blackness," in 1609, cost the court £3,000; Daniel's "Hymen's Triumph," four years later, cost the same amount. Shirley's "Triumph of Peace," in 1634, cost the Inns of Court over £20,000, but here an expensive parade was included. These are the highest figures, but Mr. Symonds estimates that the average masque cost at least £1,400—in round numbers about £5,600, or $28,000, when estimated according to our present standard of values. It is needless to say that after 1640 little money was expended on such performances. Other sorts of entertainments became fashionable after the Restoration, and it seems that most of what was good in the masque passed into that other rather hybrid production—the modern opera.

It now remains to say something about the masque from its literary side, for that is the side from which we have to approach "Comus," and, indeed, the side from which Milton approached it. Ben Jonson is *facile princeps* among the poets who devoted themselves to this form of composition, and he unquestionably deserves the credit of having made it a sub-variety of dramatic literature worthy of study. Other poets followed him, such as Chapman, Fletcher (both of whom were acknowledged by Jonson to be capable of writing a masque), Daniel, Shirley, Browne, and Carew, but only one surpassed him—the author of "Comus." Even Shakspere was willing to introduce into his plays interludes that may be called masques (*e.g.*, "Tempest," IV.), but he seems to do it to tickle the courtlings, just as he condescended to scenes of low comedy to tickle the groundlings. Jonson, however, looked upon the masque as a form of art worthy to stand by itself, and he had a famous controversy with Inigo Jones, in which he scored the latter for his presumption in thinking that his part in the joint production was of the greater importance. Critics generally have held that Jonson was right, and have praised his masques highly as pieces of pure literature. For my own part, I must confess to a sneaking sympathy with Master Inigo Jones, and to an almost complete agreement with the very tempered praise which Mr. Swinburne allots to this portion of Jonson's work. Of course, such a writer as

Jonson could not fail to give us occasional touches of admirable humor—he seems to have introduced the antimasque or comic interlude for this purpose—nor could he help striking at times an exquisite lyric note in his songs. But often enough the humor is forced and heavy, the songs uninspired, and the slight plot and allegorical and mythological characters rather lifeless without the pageantry and music that once made them delight the audiences at Whitehall. It would not be entirely fair to compare a typical masque with the libretto of an opera or a rose picked up from a deserted ball-room floor, but it suggests these things.

A slight analysis of a good masque will, however, enable the student to realize the nature of the form of art "Comus" represents better than any unenthusiastic criticism of the greatest English masque writer. Professor Masson has given in the first volume of his "Life" an excellent sketch of the performance of Shirley's "Triumph of Peace" (a costly and curious proof of the readiness of the English to show their loyalty to any institution or custom that has been attacked, for the pageant was called forth by Prynne's famous denunciation of the public and private stage in the "Histriomastix"); but this account is too long to quote and I should not like to spoil it by abridgment. I shall therefore content myself with a sketch of William Browne's delightful "Inner Temple Masque," which was perhaps not without its influence on "Comus." This masque was performed on January 13, 1614–15, but was not printed until 1772. Copies of it were in existence, however, and it is hard to believe that Milton was unacquainted with it.

The first scene is thus described: "On one side the hall towards the lower end was discovered a cliff of the sea done over in part white according to that of Virgil, lib. 5 [quotation follows]. Upon it were seated two sirens as they are described by Hyginus and Servius, with their upper parts like women to the navel and the rest like a hen. One of these at the first discovery of the scene (a sea being done in perspective on one side the cliff) began to sing this song, etc." Then followed two stanzas of a pretty song of allurement, of which we are told that "the last two lines were repeated as from a grove near by a full chorus, and the siren about to sing again," when "Triton (in all parts as Apollonius, lib. 4, Argonautic, shows him) was seen interrupting her thus:

"Leave, leave, alluring siren, with thy song
To hasten what the Fates would fain prolong:
Your sweetest tunes but groans of mandrakes be;
He his own traitor is that heareth thee,"

and so on for nine pentameter couplets of the liquid beauty so char-

acteristic of Browne. To him the siren replies in eleven couplets and explains that the mighty Circe, "daughter to the sun," has bid her sing, whom she will obey though all the gods on Olympus were to entreat her to stop. A short dialogue ensues, after which Triton takes his departure to inform his mistress Tethys of the failure of his errand, while the siren concludes the third stanza of her song.

"At the end of this song Circe was seen upon the rock quaintly attired, her hair loose about her shoulders, an anadem of flowers on her head, with a wand in her hand; and then, making towards the sirens, called them thence" with a speech the purport of which was that they should cease singing now that Ulysses and his companions had "cast their hook'd anchors on Æœa's strand." A luscious description of the beauties of the island followed, and then the sirens were commanded to go with her "to the bower To fit their welcome and show Circe's power" (ll. 65–96).

We are now brought to the second scene. "While Circe was speaking her first speech . . . a traverse [curtain] was drawn at the lower end of the hall, and gave way for the discovery of an artificial wood so near imitating nature that I think, had there been a grove like it in the open plain, birds would have been faster drawn to that than to Zeuxis' grapes. The trees stood at the climbing of an hill, and left at their foot a little plain, which they circled like a crescent. In this space upon hillocks were seen eight musicians in crimson taffety robes, with chaplets of laurels on their heads, their lutes by them, which being by them touched as a warning to the nymphs of the wood, from among the trees was heard this song . . .

"What sing the sweet birds in each grove?
Nought but love.
What sound our echoes day and night?
All delight.
What doth each wind breathe as it fleets?
Endless sweets.

CHORUS.

"Is there a place on earth this Isle excels,
Or any nymphs more happy live than we?
When all our songs, our sounds, and breathings be,
That here all love, delight, and sweetness dwells.

By this time, Circe and the sirens being come into the wood, Ulysses was seen lying asleep, under the covert of a fair tree." Circe approached, and aroused him from his enchanted slumbers by singing over him the "powerful verses" of a charm, whose lyric beauty may

well be compared with Sabrina's exorcizing song at the close of "Comus." Ulysses then awoke, and, addressing Circe as "Thou more than mortal maid," sought to know what fate she intended to him and his companions. Circe avowed her love for him and painted in alluring colors the bliss they would have together should the far-wandered Greek yield to her caresses (ll. 107–164).

At this point the antimasque, or comic interlude, began as follows: "Here one attired like a woodman in all points came forth of the wood and going towards the stage sung this song to call away the first antimasque." While the first staff of this song (ll. 165–192), of no great humor or beauty, was being sung, "out of the thickets on either side the boskage came rushing the antimasque, being such as by Circe were supposed to have been transformed (having the minds of men still) into these shapes following:

"2. With parts, heads and bodies as Actæon is pictur'd.

"2. Like Midas with asses' ears.

"2. Like wolves as Lycaon is drawn.

"2. Like baboons.

"Grillus (of whom Plutarch writes in his Morals) in the shape of a hog."

This Grillus, on whom a good deal of the comic effect hinges, slipped away while his companions were dancing "an antic measure," and then the woodman sang another song dismissing the antimasque (ll. 193–216), who it must be remembered were performing in the presence of Circe and Ulysses for the latter's delight. Then follows a dialogue in couplets, in which Ulysses complains of the treatment his companions have received, and Circe promises redress (ll. 217–266). The poetry of the passage is exquisite, as is the song which follows with these directions: "Presently in the wood was heard a full music of lutes, which descending to the stage had to them sung the following song, the Echoes being placed in several parts of the boscage.

SONG.

"Circe bids you come away.
Echo: Come away, come away.
From the rivers, from the sea.
Echo: From the sea, from the sea," etc.

After the song the second antimasque came in, consisting of seven nymphs, whose attire was minutely described. These dance "a most curious measure to a softer tune than the first antimasque," the comic element being noticeably absent. Then a short dialogue ensues between Ulysses and Circe, in which the latter promises to lend the former her wand that he may restore his companions to their normal

shapes (ll. 280-295). This task forms the *motif* of the Third Scene, which must be very briefly dealt with. The stage setting is most elaborately described, as are the costumes of the maskers, who are "discovered in several seats leaning as if asleep." Ulysses touches each of them with his wand to the accompaniment of a pretty song, whereupon "the knights" arise and are brought by Ulysses "to the [front of the ?] stage," loud music sounding, to which they dance their first measure. Another song brings them to the second dance, then a third song bids them choose the ladies they wish to take out. "The old measures, galliards, corantoes, the brawls, etc.," are danced together, then the ladies are led to their seats, the knights dance another measure, and a fourth song calls them away.

Such was the beautiful "Inner Temple Masque," the strictly literary portion of which amounted to only 329 verses. It is plain that, in spite of Browne's really delightful poetry and his facile inventiveness, the main features of the entertainment were the scenery, the costumes, the dancing, and the music. In "Comus," however, as the student will not fail to observe, Milton, while following the traditions of his predecessors, lays as little stress as possible upon externals, and concentrates his energy chiefly upon the literary side of his work. Against the 329 verses of Browne he gives us 1,023, a considerable portion of which belong to the metrical form appropriate to the regular drama rather than to the masque—a fact which has led to not a little misapprehension among critics as to the real nature of his poem and has to a certain extent justified some of them, notably Dr. Johnson, in demanding more action and subtler differentiation of character.

As we have seen, the masque was acted at Ludlow Castle on Michaelmas night, 1634. In order to give time for the setting of the songs to music and the training of the actors the poet must have been ready with his manuscript at least by the beginning of the summer of that year. Lawes probably gave him such personal details about the actors and the scene of the intended performance as would enable him to insert the proper compliments and to introduce Sabrina in honor of the river Severn. It may possibly be that Milton, like the majority of his countrymen, felt that Prynne had gone too far in his "Histriomastix," and that the young Puritan was not sorry to have an opportunity to show that religious sincerity has no necessary connection with a long face. He may, too, have been glad of an occasion to measure his strength with the greatest poets of the day ; and, perhaps, he may have desired to air his philosophy. But this is all mere conjecture. What we do know for certain is that Lord Brackley performed the part of the First Brother, Mr. Thomas Egerton of the Second Brother, Lady Alice Egerton of the Lady, and Lawes of the Attendant Spirit. We do not know who took the part of Comus, or

who composed his rout or the company of dancing shepherds (in the normal antimasque the performers were generally hired actors), but in all probability other children of the Earl and his friends or retainers filled the remaining parts. We are not even informed how the masque was received or whether Milton saw it produced, but we do know that copies of "Comus" were asked for by Lawes's friends, and that, to save himself trouble, he had an edition published in 1637, probably from the acting-copy. The name of the writer was omitted, but the motto prefixed showed that his reluctant consent had been obtained for the publication. Neither in this nor in the editions of 1645 and 1673 was the title "Comus" employed, its author preferring the simpler designation—"A Mask." Lawes's edition was dedicated to Lord Brackley and preceded by a very complimentary letter "to the author" from the famous Sir Henry Wotton. This dedication and letter were retained in the 1645 edition, but omitted from that of 1673. Milton no longer needed or wanted the support of distinguished names, and, as he certainly does not need them now, I have followed the last edition. It should be added that "Comus" exists in Milton's handwriting among the Cambridge MSS., and that another copy, known as the Bridgewater MS., is extant, which is supposed to be the acting-copy and to be in Lawes's handwriting. The variations in the text are not great, and are sufficiently dealt with in the notes.

The ingenuity of critics and editors has been considerably exercised over the sources from which Milton drew his plot and, to a certain extent, his inspiration. The often repeated story that the masque was founded on an actual adventure that befell the Lady Alice Egerton and her brothers seems to rest on slight foundations and is rather based on "Comus" than "Comus" on it. Putting this aside, the main sources about which critics are pretty well agreed are George Peele's play, "The Old Wives' Tale," Fletcher's "The Faithful Shepherdess," the Circe myth as detailed in the classical authors, and in Spenser and his school of poets, and finally, the "Comus" of Puteanus and Jonson's masque, "Pleasure Reconciled to Virtue."

With regard to Peele's play, which was printed in 1595, there can be little doubt that it stimulated Milton's imagination and gave him the kernel of his plot. As to Fletcher's delightful pastoral comedy, of which at least three editions seem to have been published before "Comus" was acted, and which had been revived as a court-play in the winter of 1633–34, there can be little doubt that Milton was more indebted to it than Fletcher was to Tasso and Guarini. The *motif* of the two poems is the same, the power of chastity to ward off evils, yet here Milton is much more plainly lord of his native province than Fletcher is. But the effect of Fletcher's exquisite lyrical style as seen in the latter portion of "Comus" is what most closely connects the two poets. It

is impossible to bring out this influence clearly either here or in the notes, where a few quotations from Fletcher will be found, but the student may be confidently referred to the elder poet's work to discover the extent and quality of the younger poet's indebtedness. Our author's literary obligations with regard to his use of the Circe myth are not very definitely traceable. He naturally had recourse to the "Odyssey," directly or indirectly, for that great poem is the fountain-head of romance. Ovid had previously drawn from the same source with regard to the same subject ("Metamorphoses," lib. xiv.) and minute critics have detected in "Comus" the influence of the Roman poet. Still more patent, however, is the influence of Spenser and the great romantic poets of Italy, who sang "of forests and enchantments drear." The Circe myth is also, as we have seen, the subject of Browne's "Inner Temple Masque," and there are several touches in "Comus" that may possibly be traceable to it. Milton was too young to have seen the masque performed, and I do not find any evidence in the latest edition of Browne's poems that his charming trifle was revived; still, more than one manuscript copy of it was in existence, and Milton is known to have been interested in "Britannia's Pastorals." A copy of the folio edition of the latter poem in Mr. Huth's library is even thought to contain annotations by him.

It will be remembered that Milton did not give his masque the name it now bears; perhaps he was actuated both by modesty and by a desire to avoid the confusion of his poem with a Latin play entitled "Comus," written by a professor at Louvain, Hendrik van der Putten or, as he was known to the scholarly world, Erycius Puteanus. This "extravaganza in prose and verse," as Masson calls it, had been printed in 1608 and an English edition had appeared at Oxford in 1634. I have not been able to see a copy of it, but I gather from the editors that it is not unlikely that Milton had seen the book and taken a few hints from it. Ben Jonson, too, in his masque, "Pleasure Reconciled to Virtue" (1619), had introduced Comus as a character, but only as "the god of cheer or the Belly." Milton could have got little inspiration from this "first father of sauce and deviser of jelly," whose personal appearance, though resembling that of our great Comus, was plainly derived from the "Imagines" of the elder Philostratus. The Comus of Puteanus is said to be "a much subtler embodiment of sensual hedonism" (Verity) than Jonson's belly-god, but all good critics are agreed that Milton's conception of the character is essentially his own and that, in the words of his chief biographer, "he was bold enough to add a brand-new god, no less, to the classic Pantheon, and to import him into Britain." But it would seem that Puteanus ought at least to have the credit for having seen that the shad-

owy deity of the post-classical period could be developed into a figure of interest and importance.[1]

So much space has been devoted to describing the evolution of Milton's great poem that there is little room to discuss the masque itself, which is a matter of slight consequence to the genuine lover of poetry. For such an one will need no editor or critic to point out to him the abiding loveliness and beauty of this purest of English poems. "Comus" is great in the purity and beauty of its sentiments, in the depth and range of its underlying philosophy, in the nobility of its diction, and the fluidity of its rhythmical movement. It is not great structurally and could not have maintained the grand style at its height; but this is only another way of saying that in 1634 Milton could not have written "Paradise Lost." The imperfect of a higher species may, however, be worth much more to us than the perfect of a lower species. Gray's "Elegy" is more perfect as a work of art than "Comus" and is beautiful in itself, but Milton's masque obviously represents a far higher poetical achievement.]

The first Scene discovers a wild wood.

The ATTENDANT SPIRIT *descends or enters.*

BEFORE the starry threshold of Jove's court
My mansion is, where those immortal shapes
Of bright aërial spirits live insphered
In regions mild of calm and sérene air,
Above the smoke and stir of this dim spot
Which men call Earth, and, with low-thoughted care,
Confined and pestered in this pinfold here,
Strive to keep up a frail and feverish being,
Unmindful of the crown that Virtue gives,
After this mortal change, to her true servants
Amongst the énthroned gods on sainted seats.
Yet some there be that by due steps aspire
To lay their just hands on that golden key
That opes the palace of eternity.
To such my errand is; and, but for such,
I would not soil these pure ambrosial weeds

[1] With regard to the Comus of antiquity the student may consult the note to line 58 of the masque.

With the rank vapors of this sin-worn mold.
But to my task. Neptune besides the sway
Of every salt flood and each ebbing stream,
Took in by lot, 'twixt high and nether Jove,
Imperial rule of all the sea-girt isles
That, like to rich and various gems, inlay
The unadornèd bosom of the deep;
Which he, to grace his tributary gods,
By course commits to several government,
And gives them leave to wear their sapphire crowns
And wield their little tridents. But this Isle,
The greatest and the best of all the main,
He quarters to his blue-haired deities;
And all this tract that fronts the falling sun
A noble Peer of mickle trust and power
Has in his charge, with tempered awe to guide
An old and haughty nation, proud in arms:
Where his fair offspring, nursed in princely lore,
Are coming to attend their father's state,
And new-intrusted sceptre. But their way
Lies through the pérplexed paths of this drear wood,
The nodding horror of whose shady brows
Threats the forlorn and wandering passenger;
And here their tender age might suffer peril,
But that, by quick command from sovran Jove,
I was despatched for their defense and guard:
And listen why; for I will tell you now
What never yet was heard in tale or song,
From old or modern bard, in hall or bower.
Bacchus, that first from out the purple grape
Crushed the sweet poison of misusèd wine,
After the Tuscan mariners transformed,
Coasting the Tyrrhene shore, as the winds listed,
On Circè's island fell (who knows not Circè,
The daughter of the Sun, whose charmèd cup
Whoever tasted lost his upright shape,
And downward fell into a grovelling swine?)

This Nymph, that gazed upon his clustering locks,
With ivy berries wreathed, and his blithe youth,
Had by him, ere he parted thence, a son
Much like his father, but his mother more,
Whom therefore she brought up, and Comus named :
Who, ripe and frolic of his full-grown age,
Roving the Celtic and Iberian fields,
At last betakes him to this ominous wood,
And, in thick shelter of black shades imbowered,
Excels his mother at her mighty art ;
Offering to every weary traveller
His orient liquor in a crystal glass,
To quench the drouth of Phœbus ; which as they taste
(For most do taste through fond intemperate thirst),
Soon as the potion works, their human count'nance,
The express resemblance of the gods, is changed
Into some brutish form of wolf or bear,
Or ounce or tiger, hog, or bearded goat,
All other parts remaining as they were.
And they, so perfect is their misery,
Not once perceive their foul disfigurement,
But boast themselves more comely than before,
And all their friends and native home forget,
To roll with pleasure in a sensual sty.
Therefore, when any favored of high Jove
Chances to pass through this adventurous glade,
Swift as the sparkle of a glancing star
I shoot from heaven, to give him safe convoy,
As now I do. But first I must put off
These my sky robes, spun out of Iris' woof,
And take the weeds and likeness of a swain
That to the service of this house belongs ;
Who, with his soft pipe and smooth-dittied song,
Well knows to still the wild winds when they roar,
And hush the waving woods ; nor of less faith,
And in this office of his mountain watch
Likeliest, and nearest to the present aid

Of this occasion. But I hear the tread
Of hateful steps; I must be viewless now.

COMUS *enters, with a charming-rod in one hand, his glass in the other; with him a rout of monsters, headed like sundry sorts of wild beasts, but otherwise like men and women, their apparel glistering. They come in making a riotous and unruly noise, with torches in their hands.*

Comus. The star that bids the shepherd fold
Now the top of heaven doth hold;
And the gilded car of day
His glowing axle doth allay
In the steep Atlantic stream;
And the slope sun his upward beam
Shoots against the dusky pole,
Pacing toward the other goal
Of his chamber in the east.
Meanwhile, welcome joy and feast,
Midnight shout and revelry,
Tipsy dance and jollity.
Braid your locks with rosy twine,
Dropping odors, dropping wine.
Rigor now is gone to bed;
And Advice with scrupulous head,
Strict Age, and sour Severity,
With their grave saws, in slumber lie.
We, that are of purer fire,
Imitate the starry quire,
Who, in their nightly watchful spheres,
Lead in swift round the months and years.
The sounds and seas, with all their finny drove,
Now to the moon in wavering morrice move;
And on the tawny sands and shelves
Trip the pert fairies and the dapper elves.
By dimplèd brook and fountain-brim,
The wood-nymphs, decked with daisies trim,
Their merry wakes and pastimes keep:

What hath night to do with sleep?
Night hath better sweets to prove;
Venus now wakes, and wakens Love.
Come, let us our rights begin;
'Tis only daylight that makes sin,
Which these dun shades will ne'er report.
Hail, goddess of nocturnal sport,
Dark-veiled Cotytto, to whom the secret flame
Of midnight torches burns! mysterious dame,
That ne'er art called but when the dragon womb
Of Stygian darkness spets her thickest gloom,
And makes one blot of all the air!
Stay thy cloudy ebon chair,
Wherein thou rid'st with Hecat', and befriend
Us thy vowed priests, till utmost end
Of all thy dues be done, and none left out;
Ere the blabbing eastern scout,
The nice Morn on the Indian steep,
From her cabined loop-hole peep,
And to the tell-tale Sun descry
Our concealed solemnity.
Come, knit hands, and beat the ground
In a light fantastic round. [*The Measure.*
Break off, break off! I feel the different pace
Of some chaste footing near about this ground.
Run to your shrouds within these brakes and trees;
Our number may affright. Some virgin sure
(For so I can distinguish by mine art)
Benighted in these woods! Now to my charms,
And to my wily trains: I shall ere long
Be well stocked with as fair a herd as grazed
About my mother Circè. Thus I hurl
My dazzling spells into the spongy air,
Of power to cheat the eye with blear illusion,
And give it false presentments, lest the place
And my quaint habits breed astonishment,
And put the damsel to suspicious flight;

Which must not be, for that's against my course.
I, under fair pretense of friendly ends,
And well-placed words of glozing courtesy,
Baited with reasons not unplausible,
Wind me into the easy-hearted man,
And hug him into snares. When once her eye
Hath met the virtue of this magic dust,
I shall appear some harmless villager,
Whom thrift keeps up about his country gear.
But here she comes ; I fairly step aside,
And hearken, if I may, her business here.

The LADY *enters.*

Lady. This way the noise was, if mine ear be true,
My best guide now. Methought it was the sound
Of riot and ill-managed merriment,
Such as the jocund flute or gamesome pipe
Stirs up among the loose unlettered hinds,
When, for their teeming flocks and granges full,
In wanton dance they praise the bounteous Pan,
And thank the gods amiss. I should be loth
To meet the rudeness and swilled insolence
Of such late wassailers ; yet, oh ! where else
Shall I inform my unacquainted feet
In the blind mazes of this tangled wood ?
My brothers, when they saw me wearied out
With this long way, resolving here to lodge
Under the spreading favor of these pines,
Stepped, as they said, to the next thicket side
To bring me berries, or such cooling fruit
As the kind hospitable woods provide.
They left me then when the gray-hooded Even,
Like a sad votarist in palmer's weed,
Rose from the hindmost wheels of Phœbus' wain.
But where they are, and why they came not back,
Is now the labor of my thoughts. 'Tis likeliest

They had engaged their wandering steps too far;
And envious darkness, ere they could return,
Had stole them from me. Else, O thievish Night,
Why shouldst thou, but for some felonious end,
In thy dark lantern thus close up the stars
That Nature hung in heaven, and filled their lamps
With everlasting oil, to give due light
To the misled and lonely traveller?
This is the place, as well as I may guess,
Whence even now the tumult of loud mirth
Was rife, and perfect in my listening ear;
Yet naught but single darkness do I find.
What might this be? A thousand fantasies
Begin to throng into my memory,
Of calling shapes, and beckoning shadows dire,
And airy tongues that syllable men's names
On sands and shores and desert wildernesses.
These thoughts may startle well, but not astound
The virtuous mind, that ever walks attended
By a strong siding champion, Consciënce.
O, welcome, pure-eyed Faith, white-handed Hope,
Thou hovering angel girt with golden wings,
And thou unblemished form of Chastity!
I see ye visibly, and now believe
That He, the Súpreme Good, to whom all things ill
Are but as slavish officers of vengeance,
Would send a glistering guardian, if need were,
To keep my life and honor unassailed.—
Was I deceived, or did a sable cloud
Turn forth her silver lining on the night?
I did not err: there does a sable cloud
Turn forth her silver lining on the night,
And casts a gleam over this tufted grove.
I cannot hallo to my brothers, but
Such noise as I can make to be heard farthest
I'll venture; for my new-enlivened spirits
Prompt me, and they perhaps are not far off.

SONG.

Sweet Echo, sweetest nymph, that liv'st unseen
Within thy airy shell
By slow Meander's margent green,
And in the violet-embroidered vale
Where the lovelorn nightingale
Nightly to thee her sad song mourneth well:
Canst thou not tell me of a gentle pair
That likest thy Narcissus are?
O, if thou have
Hid them in some flowery cave,
Tell me but where,
Sweet Queen of Parley, Daughter of the Sphere!
So may'st thou be translated to the skies,
And give resounding grace to all heaven's harmonies!

Comus. Can any mortal mixture of earth's mold
Breathe such divine enchanting ravishment?
Sure something holy lodges in that breast,
And with these raptures moves the vocal air
To testify his hidden residence.
How sweetly did they float upon the wings
Of silence, through the empty-vaulted night,
At every fall smoothing the raven down
Of darkness till it smiled! I have oft heard
My mother Circè, with the Sirens three,
Amidst the flowery-kirtled Naiades,
Culling their potent herbs and baleful drugs,
Who, as they sung, would take the prisoned soul,
And lap it in Elysium: Scylla wept,
And chid her barking waves into attention,
And fell Charybdis murmured soft applause.
Yet they in pleasing slumber lulled the sense,
And in sweet madness robbed it of itself;
But such a sacred and home-felt delight,
Such sober certainty of waking bliss,

I never heard till now. I'll speak to her,
And she shall be my queen.—Hail, foreign wonder!
Whom certain these rough shades did never breed,
Unless the goddess that in rural shrine
Dwell'st here with Pan or Sylvan, by blest song
Forbidding every bleak unkindly fog
To touch the prosperous growth of this tall wood.
Lady. Nay, gentle shepherd, ill is lost that praise
That is addressed to unattending ears.
Not any boast of skill, but éxtreme shift
How to regain my severed company,
Compelled me to awake the courteous Echo
To give me answer from her mossy couch.
Comus. What chance, good Lady, hath bereft you thus?
Lady. Dim darkness and this leavy labyrinth.
Comus. Could that divide you from near-ushering guides?
Lady. They left me weary on a grassy turf.
Comus. By falsehood, or discourtesy, or why?
Lady. To seek i' the valley some cool friendly spring.
Comus. And left your fair side all unguarded, Lady?
Lady. They were but twain, and purposed quick return.
Comus. Perhaps forestalling night prevented them.
Lady. How easy my misfortune is to hit!
Comus. Imports their loss, beside the present need?
Lady. No less than if I should my brothers lose.
Comus. Were they of manly prime, or youthful bloom?
Lady. As smooth as Hebe's their unrazored lips.
Comus. Two such I saw, what time the labored ox
In his loose traces from the furrow came,
And the swinked hedger at his supper sat.
I saw them under a green mantling vine,
That crawls along the side of yon small hill,
Plucking ripe clusters from the tender shoots;
Their port was more than human, as they stood.
I took it for a faery visiön

Of same gay creatures of the element,
That in the colors of the rainbow live,
And play i' the plighted clouds. I was awe-strook,
And, as I passed, I worshipped. If those you seek,
It were a journey like the path to heaven
To help you find them.
Lady. Gentle villager,
What readiest way would bring me to that place ?
Comus. Due west it rises from this shrubby point.
Lady. To find out that, good shepherd, I suppose,
In such a scant allowance of starlight,
Would overtask the best land-pilot's art,
Without the sure guess of well-practised feet.
Comus. I know each lane, and every alley green,
Dingle, or bushy dell, of this wild wood,
And every bosky bourn from side to side,
My daily walks and ancient neighborhood ;
And, if your stray attendance be yet lodged,
Or shroud within these limits, I shall know
Ere morrow wake, or the low-roosted lark
From her thatched pallet rouse. If otherwise,
I can conduct you, Lady, to a low
But loyal cottage, where you may be safe
Till further quest.
Lady. Shepherd, I take thy word,
And trust thy honest-offered courtesy,
Which oft is sooner found in lowly sheds,
With smoky rafters, than in tapestry halls
And courts of princes, where it first was named,
And yet is most pretended. In a place
Less warranted than this, or less secure,
I cannot be, that I should fear to change it.
Eye me, blest Providence, and square my trial
To my proportioned strength!—Shepherd, lead on.
[*Exeunt.*

Enter the Two Brothers.

Elder Brother. Unmuffle, ye faint stars; and thou, fair moon,
That wont'st to love the traveller's benison,
Stoop thy pale visage through an amber cloud,
And disinherit Chaos, that reigns here
In double night of darkness and of shades;
Or, if your influence be quite dammed up
With black usurping mists, some gentle taper,
Though a rush candle from the wicker hole
Of some clay habitation, visit us
With thy long levelled rule of streaming light,
And thou shalt be our star of Arcady,
Or Tyrian Cynosure.

Second Brother. Or, if our eyes
Be barred that happiness, might we but hear
The folded flocks, penned in their wattlèd cotes,
Or sound of pastoral reed with oaten stops,
Or whistle from the lodge, or village cock
Count the night-watches to his feathery dames,
'Twould be some solace yet, some little cheering,
In this close dungeon of innumerous boughs.
But, oh, that hapless virgin, our lost sister!
Where may she wander now, whither betake her
From the chill dew, amongst rude burs and thistles?
Perhaps some cold bank is her bolster now,
Or 'gainst the rugged bark of some broad elm
Leans her unpillowed head, fraught with sad fears.
What if in wild amazement and affright,
Or, while we speak, within the direful grasp
Of savage hunger, or of savage heat!

Elder Brother. Peace, brother: be not over-exquisite
To cast the fashion of uncertain evils;
For, grant they be so, while they rest unknown,

What need a man forestall his date of grief,
And run to meet what he would most avoid ?
Or, if they be but false alarms of fear,
How bitter is such self-delusiön !
I do not think my sister so to seek,
Or so unprincipled in virtue's book,
And the sweet peace that goodness bosoms ever,
As that the single want of light and noise
(Not being in danger, as I trust she is not)
Could stir the constant mood of her calm thoughts,
And put them into misbecoming plight.
Virtue could see to do what Virtue would
By her own radiant light, though sun and moon
Were in the flat sea sunk. And Wisdom's self
Oft seeks to sweet retirèd solitude,
Where, with her best nurse, Contemplatiön,
She plumes her feathers, and lets grow her wings,
That, in the various bustle of resort,
Were all to-ruffled, and sometimes impaired.
He that has light within his own clear breast
May sit i' the centre, and enjoy bright day :
But he that hides a dark soul and foul thoughts
Benighted walks under the midday sun ;
Himself is his own dungeon.
Second Brother. 'Tis most true
That musing Meditation most affects
The pensive secrecy of desert cell,
Far from the cheerful haunt of men and herds,
And sits as safe as in a senate-house ;
For who would rob a hermit of his weeds,
His few books, or his beads, or maple dish,
Or do his gray hairs any violence ?
But Beauty, like the fair Hesperian tree
Laden with blooming gold, had need the guard
Of dragon watch with unenchanted eye
To save her blossoms, and defend her fruit,
From the rash hand of bold Incontinence.

You may as well spread out the unsunnèd heaps
Of miser's treasure by an outlaw's den,
And tell me it is safe, as bid me hope
Danger will wink on Opportunity,
And let a single, helpless maiden pass
Uninjured in this wild surrounding waste.
Of night or loneliness it recks me not;
I fear the dread events that dog them both,
Lest some ill-greeting touch attempt the person
Of our unownèd sister.

Elder Brother. I do not, brother,
Infer as if I thought my sister's state
Secure without all doubt or controversy;
Yet, where an equal poise of hope and fear
Does arbitrate the event, my nature is
That I incline to hope rather than fear,
And gladly banish squint suspiciön.
My sister is not so defenseless left
As you imagine; she has a hidden strength,
Which you remember not.

Second Brother. What hidden strength,
Unless the strength of Heaven, if you mean that?

Elder Brother. I mean that too, but yet a hidden strength,
Which, if Heaven gave it, may be termed her own.
'Tis chastity, my brother, chastity:
She that has that is clad in cómplete steel,
And, like a quivered nymph with arrows keen,
May trace huge forests, and unharbored heaths,
Infámous hills, and sandy perilous wilds;
Where, through the sacred rays of chastity,
No savage fierce, bandite, or mountaineer,
Will dare to soil her virgin purity.
Yea, there where very desolation dwells,
By grots and caverns shagged with horrid shades,
She may pass on with unblenched majesty,
Be it not done in pride, or in presumption.

Some say no evil thing that walks by night,
In fog or fire, by lake or moorish fen,
Blue meagre hag, or stubborn unlaid ghost
That breaks his magic chains at curfew time,
No goblin or swart faery of the mine,
Hath hurtful power o'er true virginity.
Do ye believe me yet, or shall I call
Antiquity from the old schools of Greece
To testify the arms of chastity?
Hence had the huntress Dian her dread bow,
Fair silver-shafted queen, forever chaste,
Wherewith she tamed the brinded lioness
And spotted mountain pard, but set at naught
The frivolous bolt of Cupid; gods and men
Feared her stern frown, and she was queen o' the woods.
What was that snaky-headed Gorgon shield
That wise Minerva wore, unconquered virgin,
Wherewith she freezed her foes to cóngealed stone,
But rigid looks of chaste austerity,
And noble grace that dashed brute violence
With sudden adoration and blank awe?
So dear to Heaven is saintly chastity
That, when a soul is found sincerely so,
A thousand liveried angels lackey her,
Driving far off each thing of sin and guilt,
And in clear dream and solemn visiön
Tell her of things that no gross ear can hear;
Till oft convérse with heavenly habitants
Begin to cast a beam on the outward shape,
The unpolluted temple of the mind,
And turns it by degrees to the soul's essence,
Till all be made immortal. But, when lust,
By unchaste looks, loose gestures, and foul talk,
But most by lewd and lavish act of sin,
Lets in defilement to the inward parts,
The soul grows clotted by contagiön,
Imbodies, and imbrutes, till she quite lose

The dívine property of her first being.
Such are those thick and gloomy shadows damp
Oft seen in charnel-vaults and sepulchres,
Lingering and sitting by a new-made grave,
As loth to leave the body that it loved,
And linked itself by carnal sensuality
To a degenerate and degraded state.
Second Brother. How charming is divine Philosophy!
Not harsh and crabbed, as dull fools suppose,
But musical as is Apollo's lute,
And a perpetual feast of nectared sweets,
Where no crude surfeit reigns.
Elder Brother. List! list! I hear
Some far-off hallo break the silent air.
Second Brother. Methought so too; what should it be?
Elder Brother. For certain,
Either some one, like us, night-foundered here;
Or else some neighbor woodman, or, at worst,
Some roving robber calling to his fellows.
Second Brother. Heaven keep my sister! Again, again, and near!
Best draw, and stand upon our guard.
Elder Brother. I'll hallo.
If he be friendly, he comes well: if not,
Defense is a good cause, and Heaven be for us!

Enter the ATTENDANT SPIRIT, *habited like a shepherd.*

That hallo I should know. What are you? speak.
Come not too near; you fall on iron stakes else.
Spirit. What voice is that? my young Lord? speak again.
Second Brother. O brother, 'tis my father's shepherd, sure.
Elder Brother. Thyrsis! whose artful strains have oft delayed

The huddling brook to hear his madrigal,
And sweetened every musk rose of the dale.
How cam'st thou here, good swain? Hath any ram
Slipped from the fold, or young kid lost his dam,
Or straggling wether the pent flock forsook?
How couldst thou find this dark sequestered nook?
Spirit. O my loved master's heir, and his next joy,
I came not here on such a trival toy
As a strayed ewe, or to pursue the stealth
Of pilfering wolf; not all the fleecy wealth
That doth enrich these downs is worth a thought
To this my errand, and the care it brought.
But, oh! my virgin Lady, where is she?
How chance she is not in your company?
Elder Brother. To tell thee sadly, Shepherd, without blame
Or our neglect, we lost her as we came.
Spirit. Ay me unhappy! then my fears are true.
Elder Brother. What fears, good Thyrsis? Prithee briefly shew.
Spirit. I'll tell ye. 'Tis not vain or fabulous
(Though so esteemed by shallow ignorance)
What the sage poets, taught by the heavenly Muse,
Storied of old in high immortal verse
Of dire Chimeras and enchanted isles,
And rifted rocks whose entrance leads to hell;
For such there be, but unbelief is blind.
Within the navel of this hideous wood,
Immured in cypress shades, a sorcerer dwells,
Of Bacchus and of Circè born, great Comus,
Deep skilled in all his mother's witcheries,
And here to every thirsty wanderer
By sly enticement gives his baneful cup,
With many murmurs mixed, whose pleasing poison
The visage quite transforms of him that drinks,
And the inglorious likeness of a beast
Fixes instead, unmolding reason's mintage

Charáctered in the face. This have I learnt
Tending my flocks hard by i' the hilly crofts
That brow this bottom glade; whence night by night
He and his monstrous rout are heard to howl
Like stabled wolves, or tigers at their prey,
Doing abhorrèd rites to Hecatè
In their obscurèd haunts of inmost bowers.
Yet have they many baits and guileful spells
To inveigle and invite the unwary sense
Of them that pass unweeting by the way.
This evening late, by then the chewing flocks
Had ta'en their supper on the savory herb
Of knot-grass dew-besprent, and were in fold,
I sat me down to watch upon a bank
With ivy canopied, and interwove
With flaunting honeysuckle, and began,
Wrapt in a pleasing fit of melancholy,
To meditate my rural minstrelsy,
Till fancy had her fill. But ere a close
The wonted roar was up amidst the woods,
And filled the air with barbarous dissonance;
At which I ceased, and listened them awhile,
Till an unusual stop of sudden silence
Gave respite to the drowsy frighted steeds
That draw the litter of close-curtained Sleep.
At last a soft and solemn-breathing sound
Rose like a steam of rich distilled perfumes,
And stole upon the air, that even Silence
Was took ere she was ware, and wished she might
Deny her nature, and be never more,
Still to be so displaced. I was all ear,
And took in strains that might create a soul
Under the ribs of Death. But, oh! ere long
Too well I did perceive it was the voice
Of my most honored Lady, your dear sister.
Amazed I stood, harrowed with grief and fear;
And "O poor hapless nightingale," thought I,

"How sweet thou sing'st, how near the deadly snare!"
Then down the lawns I ran with headlong haste,
Through paths and turnings often trod by day,
Till, guided by mine ear, I found the place
Where that damned wizard, hid in sly disguise
(For so by certain signs I knew), had met
Already, ere my best speed could prevent,
The aidless innocent Lady, his wished prey;
Who gently asked if he had seen such two,
Supposing him some neighbor villager.
Longer I durst not stay, but soon I guessed
Ye were the two she meant; with that I sprung
Into swift flight, till I had found you here;
But further know I not.
Second Brother. O night and shades,
How are ye joined with hell in triple knot
Against the unarmed weakness of one virgin,
Alone and helpless! Is this the confidence
You gave me, brother?
Elder Brother. Yes, and keep it still;
Lean on it safely; not a period
Shall be unsaid for me. Against the threats
Of malice or of sorcery, or that power
Which erring men call Chance, this I hold firm:
Virtue may be assailed, but never hurt;
Surprised by unjust force, but not enthralled;
Yea, even that which Mischief meant most harm
Shall in the happy trial prove most glory.
But evil on itself shall back recoil,
And mix no more with goodness, when at last,
Gathered like scum, and settled to itself,
It shall be in eternal restless change
Self-fed and self-consumed. If this fail,
The pillared firmament is rottenness,
And earth's base built on stubble. But come, let's on!
Against the opposing will and arm of Heaven
May never this just sword be lifted up;

But, for that damned magician, let him be girt
With all the grisly legiōns that troop
Under the sooty flag of Acheron,
Harpies and Hydras, or all the monstrous forms
'Twixt Africa and Ind, I'll find him out,
And force him to return his purchase back,
Or drag him by the curls to a foul death,
Cursed as his life.
Spirit. Alas! good venturous youth,
I love thy courage yet, and bold emprise;
But here thy sword can do thee little stead.
Far other arms and other weapons must
Be those that quell the might of hellish charms.
He with his bare wand can unthread thy joints,
And crumble all thy sinews.
Elder Brother. Why, prithee, Shepherd,
How durst thou then thyself approach so near
As to make this relation?
Spirit. Care and utmost shifts
How to secure the Lady from surprisal
Brought to my mind a certain Shepherd Lad,
Of small regard to see to, yet well skilled
In every virtuous plant and healing herb
That spreads her verdant leaf to the morning ray.
He loved me well, and oft would beg me sing;
Which when I did, he on the tender grass
Would sit, and hearken even to ecstasy,
And in requital ope his leathern scrip,
And show me simples of a thousand names,
Telling their strange and vigorous faculties.
Amongst the rest a small unsightly root,
But of divine effect, he culled me out.
The leaf was darkish, and had prickles on it,
But in another country, as he said,
Bore a bright golden flower, but not in this soil:
Unknown, and like esteemed, and the dull swain
Treads on it daily with his clouted shoon;

And yet more med'cinal is it than that Moly
That Hermes once to wise Ulysses gave.
He called it Hæmony, and gave it me,
And bade me keep it as of sovran use
'Gainst all enchantments, mildew blast, or damp,
Or ghastly Furies' apparitiön.
I pursed it up, but little reckoning made,
Till now that this extremity compelled.
But now I find it true ; for by this means
I knew the foul enchanter, though disguised,
Entered the very lime-twigs of his spells,
And yet came off. If you have this about you
(As I will give you when we go) you may
Boldly assault the necromancer's hall ;
Where if he be, with dauntless hardihood
And brandished blade rush on him ; break his glass,
And shed the luscious liquor on the ground ;
But seize his wand. Though he and his curst crew
Fierce sign of battle make, and menace high,
Or, like the sons of Vulcan, vomit smoke,
Yet will they soon retire, if he but shrink.
Elder Brother. Thyrsis, lead on apace ; I'll follow thee ;
And some good angel bear a shield before us !

The Scene changes to a stately palace, set out with all manner of deliciousness: soft music, tables spread with all dainties. COMUS *appears with his rabble, and the* LADY *set in an enchanted chair : to whom he offers his glass ; which she puts by, and goes about to rise.*

Comus. Nay, Lady, sit. If I but wave this wand,
Your nerves are all chained up in alabaster,
And you a statue, or as Daphne was,
Root-bound, that fled Apollo.
Lady. Fool, do not boast.
Thou canst not touch the freedom of my mind

With all thy charms, although this corporal rind
Thou hast immanacled while Heaven sees good.
Comus. Why are you vexed, Lady? why do you frown?
Here dwell no frowns, nor anger; from these gates
Sorrow flies far. See, here be all the pleasures
That fancy can beget on youthful thoughts,
When the fresh blood grows lively, and returns
Brisk as the April buds in primrose season.
And first behold this cordial julep here,
That flames and dances in his crystal bounds,
With spirits of balm and fragrant syrups mixed.
Not that Nepenthes which the wife of Thone
In Egypt gave to Jove-born Helena,
Is of such power to stir up joy as this,
To life so friendly, or so cool to thirst.
Why should you be so cruel to yourself,
And to those dainty limbs, which Nature lent
For gentle usage and soft delicacy?
But you invert the covenants of her trust,
And harshly deal, like an ill borrower,
With that which you received on other terms,
Scorning the unexempt conditiōn
By which all mortal frailty must subsist,
Refreshment after toil, ease after pain,
That have been tired all day without repast,
And timely rest have wanted. But, fair Virgin,
This will restore all soon.
Lady. 'Twill not, false traitor!
'Twill not restore the truth and honesty
That thou hast banished from thy tongue with lies.
Was this the cottage and the safe abode
Thou told'st me of? What grim aspécts are these,
These oughly-headed monsters? Mercy guard me!
Hence with thy brewed enchantments, foul deceiver!
Hast thou betrayed my credulous innocence
With vizored falsehood and base forgery?

And would'st thou seek again to trap me here
With liquorish baits, fit to insnare a brute?
Were it a draft for Juno when she banquets,
I would not taste thy treasonous offer. None
But such as are good men can give good things;
And that which is not good is not delicious
To a well-governed and wise appetite.
Comus. O foolishness of men! that lend their ears
To those budge doctors of the Stoic fur,
And fetch their precepts from the Cynic tub,
Praising the lean and sallow Abstinence!
Wherefore did Nature pour her bounties forth
With such a full and unwithdrawing hand,
Covering the earth with odors, fruits, and flocks,
Thronging the seas with spawn innumerable,
But all to please and sate the curious taste?
And set to work millions of spinning worms,
That in their green shops weave the smooth-haired silk,
To deck her sons; and, that no corner might
Be vacant of her plenty, in her own loins
She hutched the all-worshipped ore and precious gems,
To store her children with. If all the world
Should, in a pet of temperance, feed on pulse,
Drink the clear stream, and nothing wear but frieze,
The All-giver would be unthanked, would be unpraised,
Not half his riches known, and yet despised;
And we should serve him as a grudging master,
As a penurious niggard of his wealth,
[illegible] language used to a woman
And live like Nature's bastards, not her sons,
Who would be quite surcharged with her own weight,
And strangled with her waste fertility:
The earth cumbered, and the winged air darked with plumes,
The herds would overmultitude their lords;
The sea o'erfraught would swell, and the unsought diamonds

Would so emblaze the forehead of the deep,
And so bestud with stars, that they below
Would grow inured to light, and come at last
To gaze upon the sun with shameless brows.
List, Lady; be not coy, and be not cozened
With that same vaunted name, Virginity.
Beauty is Nature's coin; must not be hoarded,
But must be current; and the good thereof
Consists in mutual and partaken bliss,
Unsavory in the enjoyment of itself.
If you let slip time, like a neglected rose
It withers on the stalk with languished head.
Beauty is Nature's brag, and must be shown
In courts, at feasts, and high solemnities,
Where most may wonder at the workmanship.
It is for homely features to keep home;
They had their name thence: coarse complexiöns
And cheeks of sorry grain will serve to ply
The sampler, and to tease the huswife's wool.
What need a vermeil-tinctured lip for that,
Love-darting eyes, or tresses like the morn?
There was another meaning in these gifts;
Think what, and be advised; you are but young yet.
Lady. I had not thought to have unlocked my lips
In this unhallowed air, but that this juggler
Would think to charm my judgment, as mine eyes,
Obtruding false rules pranked in reason's garb.
I hate when Vice can bolt her arguments
And Virtue has no tongue to check her pride.
Impostor! do not charge most innocent Nature,
As if she would her children should be riotous
With her abundance. She, good cateress,
Means her provision only to the good,
That live according to her sober laws,
And holy dictate of spare Temperance.
If every just man that now pines with want
Had but a moderate and beseeming share

Of that which lewdly-pampered Luxury
Now heaps upon some few with vast excess,
Nature's full blessings would be well dispensed
In unsuperfluous even proportiön,
And she no whit encumbered with her store;
And then the Giver would be better thanked,
His praise due paid: for swinish Gluttony
Ne'er looks to Heaven amidst his gorgeous feast,
But with besotted base ingratitude
Crams, and blasphemes his Feeder. Shall I go on?
Or have I said enow? To him that dares
Arm his profane tongue with contemptuous words
Against the sun-clad power of chastity,
Fain would I something say;—yet to what end?
Thou hast nor ear, nor soul, to apprehend
The súblime notion and high mystery
That must be uttered to unfold the sage
And serious doctrine of Virginity;
And thou art worthy that thou shouldst not know
More happiness than this thy present lot.
Enjoy your dear wit, and gay rhetoric,
That hath so well been taught her dazzling fence;
Thou art not fit to hear thyself convinced.
Yet, should I try, the uncontrollèd worth
Of this pure cause would kindle my rapt spirits
To such a flame of sacred vehemence
That dumb things would be moved to sympathize,
And the brute Earth would lend her nerves, and shake,
Till all thy magic structures, reared so high,
Were shattered into heaps o'er thy false head.

Comus. She fables not. I feel that I do fear
Her words set off by some superior power;
And, though not mortal, yet a cold shuddering dew
Dips me all o'er, as when the wrath of Jove
Speaks thunder and the chains of Erebus
To some of Saturn's crew. I must dissemble,
And try her yet more strongly.—Come, no more!

This is mere moral babble, and direct
Against the canon laws of our foundation.
I must not suffer this; yet 'tis but the lees
And settlings of a melancholy blood.
But this will cure all straight; one sip of this
Will bathe the drooping spirits in delight
Beyond the bliss of dreams. Be wise, and taste.

The BROTHERS *rush in with swords drawn, wrest his glass out of his hand, and break it against the ground: his rout make sign of resistance, but are all driven in. The* ATTENDANT SPIRIT *comes in.*

Spirit. What! have you let the false enchanter scape?
Oh, ye mistook; ye should have snatched his wand,
And bound him fast. Without his rod reversed,
And backward mutters of dissevering power,
We cannot free the Lady that sits here
In stony fetters fixed and motionless.
Yet stay: be not disturbed; now I bethink me,
Some other means I have which may be used,
Which once of Melibœus old I learnt,
The soothest Shepherd that e'er piped on plains.
There is a gentle Nymph not far from hence,
That with moist curb sways the smooth Severn stream:
Sabrina is her name: a Virgin pure;
Whilom she was the daughter of Locrine,
That had the sceptre from his father Brute.
She, guiltless damsel, flying the mad pursuit
Of her enragèd stepdame, Guendolen,
Commended her fair innocence to the flood
That stayed her flight with his crossflowing course.
The water-nymphs, that in the bottom played,
Held up their pearlèd wrists, and took her in,
Bearing her straight to aged Nereus' hall;
Who, piteous of her woes, reared her lank head,
And gave her to his daughters to imbathe

In nectared lavers strewed with asphodel,
And through the porch and inlet of each sense
Dropt in ambrosial oils, till she revived,
And underwent a quick immortal change,
Made Goddess of the river. Still she retains
Her maiden gentleness, and oft at eve
Visits the herds along the twilight meadows,
Helping all urchin blasts, and ill-luck signs
That the shrewd meddling elf delights to make,
Which she with precious vialed liquors heals:
For which the shepherds, at their festivals,
Carol her goodness loud in rustic lays,
And throw sweet garland wreaths into her stream,
Of pansies, pinks, and gaudy daffodils;
And, as the old Swain said, she can unlock
The clasping charm, and thaw the numbing spell,
If she be right invoked in warblèd song;
For maidenhood she loves, and will be swift
To aid a Virgin, such as was herself,
In hard-besetting need. This will I try,
And add the power of some adjuring verse.

SONG.

Sabrina fair,
  Listen where thou art sitting
Under the glassy, cool, translucent wave,
  In twisted braids of lilies knitting
The loose train of thy amber-dropping hair;
  Listen for dear honor's sake,
  Goddess of the silver lake,
    Listen and save!

Listen, and appear to us,
In name of great Océanus,
By the earth-shaking Neptune's mace,
And Tethys' grave majestic pace;
By hoary Nereus' wrinklèd look,

And the Carpathian wizard's hook;
By scaly Triton's winding shell,
And old soothsaying Glaucus' spell;
By Leucothea's lovely hands,
And her son that rules the strands;
By Thetis' tinsel-slippered feet,
And the songs of Sirens sweet;
By dead Parthenopè's dear tomb,
And fair Ligea's golden comb,
Wherewith she sits on diamond rocks
Sleeking her soft alluring locks;
By all the Nymphs that nightly dance
Upon thy streams with wily glance;
Rise, rise, and heave thy rosy head
From thy coral-paven bed,
And bridle in thy headlong wave,
Till thou our summons answered have.
Listen and save!

SABRINA *rises, attended by Water-nymphs, and sings.*

By the rushy-fringèd bank,
Where grows the willow and the osier dank,
My sliding chariot stays,
Thick set with agate, and the azurn sheen
Of turkis blue, and emerald green,
That in the channel strays;
Whilst from off the waters fleet
Thus I set my printless feet
O'er the cowslip's velvet head,
That bends not as I tread.
Gentle Swain, at thy request
I am here!

Spirit. Goddess dear,
We implore thy powerful hand
To undo the charmèd band

Of true Virgin here distressed
Through the force and through the wile
Of unblessed enchanter vile.
Sabrina. Shepherd, 'tis my office best
To help ensnarèd chastity.
Brightest Lady, look on me.
Thus I sprinkle on thy breast
Drops that from my fountain pure
I have kept of precious cure;
Thrice upon thy finger's tip,
Thrice upon thy rubied lip:
Next this marble venomed seat,
Smeared with gums of glutinous heat,
I touch with chaste palms moist and cold.
Now the spell hath lost his hold;
And I must haste ere morning hour
To wait in Amphitritè's bower.

SABRINA *descends, and the* LADY *rises out of her seat.*

Spirit. Virgin, daughter of Locrine,
Sprung of old Anchises' line,
May thy brimmèd waves for this
Their full tribute never miss
From a thousand petty rills,
That tumble down the snowy hills:
Summer drouth or singèd air
Never scorch thy tresses fair,
Nor wet October's torrent flood
Thy molten crystal fill with mud;
May thy billows roll ashore
The beryl and the golden ore;
May thy lofty head be crowned
With many a tower and terrace round,
And here and there thy banks upon
With groves of myrrh and cinnamon.
Come, Lady; while Heaven lends us grace,

Let us fly this cursèd place,
Lest the sorcerer us entice
With some other new device.
Not a waste or needless sound
Till we come to holier ground.
I shall be your faithful guide
Through this gloomy covert wide;
And not many furlongs thence
Is your Father's residence,
Where this night are met in state
Many a friend to gratulate
His wished presence, and beside
All the swains that there abide
With jigs and rural dance resort.
We shall catch them at their sport,
And our sudden coming there
Will double all their mirth and cheer.
Come, let us haste; the stars grow high,
But Night sits monarch yet in the mid sky.

The Scene changes, presenting Ludlow Town, and the President's Castle; then come in Country Dancers; after them the ATTENDANT SPIRIT, *with the Two* BROTHERS *and the* LADY.

SONG.

Spirit. Back, Shepherds, back! Enough your play
Till next sunshine holiday.
Here be, without duck or nod,
Other trippings to be trod
Of lighter toes, and such court guise
As Mercury did first devise
With the mincing Dryades
On the lawns and on the leas.

This second Song presents them to their Father and Mother.

Noble Lord and Lady bright,
I have brought ye new delight.

Here behold so goodly grown
Three fair branches of your own.
Heaven hath timely tried their youth,
Their faith, their patience, and their truth,
And sent them here through hard assays
With a crown of deathless praise,
To triumph in victorious dance
O'er sensual folly and intemperance.

The dances ended, the SPIRIT *epiloguizes.*

Spirit. To the ocean now I fly,
And those happy climes that lie
Where day never shuts his eye,
Up in the broad fields of the sky.
There I suck the liquid air,
All amidst tho gardens fair
Of Hesperus, and his daughters three
That sing about the golden tree.
Along the crispèd shades and bowers
Revels the spruce and jocund Spring ;
The Graces and the rosy-bosomed Hours
Thither all their bounties bring.
There eternal Summer dwells,
And west winds with musky wing
About the cedarn alleys fling
Nard and cassia's balmy smells.
Iris there with humid bow
Waters the odorous banks, that blow
Flowers of more minglèd hue
Than her purfled scarf can shew,
And drenches with Elysian dew
(List, mortals, if your ears be true)
Beds of hyacinth and roses,
Where young Adonis oft reposes,
Waxing well of his deep wound,
In slumber soft, and on the ground

Sadly sits the Assyrian queen.
But far above, in spanglèd sheen,
Celestial Cupid, her famed son, advanced
Holds his dear Psychè, sweet entranced
After her wandering labors long,
Till free consent the gods among
Make her his eternal bride,
And from her fair unspotted side
Two blissful twins are to be born,
Youth and Joy; so Jove hath sworn.
  But now my task is smoothly done:
I can fly, or I can run
Quickly to the green earth's end,
Where the bowed welkin slow doth bend,
And from thence can soar as soon
To the corners of the moon.
Mortals, that would follow me,
Love Virtue; she alone is free.
She can teach ye how to climb
Higher than the sphery chime;
Or, if Virtue feeble were,
Heaven itself would stoop to her.

LYCIDAS

[The external facts relating to the evolution of "Lycidas" are ample on the whole, and easy to set forth. Among Milton's friends at Christ's College had been two sons of Sir John King, long Secretary for Ireland. They were admitted during his third year, Roger, the elder, being sixteen and his brother Edward two years younger. Nothing seems to be heard of them until four years later, when, to the surprise of everyone, Edward King was chosen a fellow of the college, in obedience to a royal mandate, which had doubtless been obtained through considerable political influence. Such royal interference was not usual or palatable, and it must have been especially galling to Milton, who, as a Bachelor of two years' standing and "an acknowledged ornament of his college," to quote Professor Masson, had good reason to expect that the honor would have fallen to him. He seems, however, to have taken his disappointment gracefully and to have shared the general liking for his brilliant and amiable college-mate, who, thanks to the pen of a disappointed rival, now lives in our memories even more freshly than his two greater fellow-students, John Cleveland, the royalist poet, and Henry More, the Platonist. After Milton left Cambridge, King continued his academic career in an orthodox and successful way, proceeding M.A. in 1633, and filling the offices of tutor and prælector while preparing himself for active work in the Church. During the vacation of 1637, however, he sailed from Chester for Ireland, where he had been born and where he had relations and friends of high social standing. On the 10th of August his ship struck on a rock off the Welsh coast and went down. Accounts vary as to the cause of the accident, and it is not known how many, if any, were saved. The memorial volume shortly to be described stated that he died in the act of prayer, which would imply that some of the passengers and crew escaped, but may be merely a touch of imagination.

When the news of King's death was received at Cambridge, it was at once felt that special steps should be taken to do honor to his memory, and at that time this laudable desire could be accomplished in no fitter way than by collecting and publishing a volume of elegies in-

scribed with his name. It is true that this mode of testifying to an individual's worth was rather common in the seventeenth century, but it was thoroughly academical, and afforded an admirable opportunity to don and undergraduate alike to bring before the public learned effusions in Latin and Greek verse that must else have slumbered in many a dusty desk. Naturally royal personages would be most often honored in this way—it made slight difference whether they died or were born—but not a few other distinguished people were given this extra crown of glory after their deaths.

The collection,[1] when it finally appeared from the university press, consisted of two parts separately paged and titled, both bearing the date 1638. They are sometimes found bound together, sometimes apart. The first portion consisted of twenty-three poems in Greek and Latin, filling thirty-six pages. Both the learned languages figured in the title, which ran *Justa Edovardo King naufrago ab amicis mœrentibus, amoris et μνείας χάριν*, or, as Masson once translated it, "Obsequies to Edward King, drowned by shipwreck, in token of love and remembrance, by his sorrowing friends"—which is only grammatically ambiguous. The second part consisted of thirteen English poems, filling twenty-five pages, and was entitled "Obsequies to the Memorie of Mr. Edward King, Anno Dom. 1638." Of the contributors we need note only Henry More, who naturally wrote in Greek; Henry King, Edward's brother; Joseph Beaumont, afterwards author of a curious poem called "Psyche;" and John Cleveland, who subsequently showed his powers as an elegist when Charles I. was his subject, but here fell little short of the climax of absurdity.

"Lycidas" was, of course, included in Milton's 1645 edition of his poems, and the short prose argument which now precedes the verses was then inserted. No changes save orthographical were made in the edition of 1673; the version of 1645 is, therefore, the final form its author gave to his lyrical masterpiece. A comparison of the Cambridge MS., the edition of 1638, and a copy of this edition with corrections in Milton's handwriting still preserved in the University Library at Cambridge, has enabled critics to trace the evolution of certain passages of the poem, and thrown much light upon Milton's

[1] Is it possible that the poems were submitted to Milton for revision and arrangement and that he placed his own great tribute last with the simple initials, J. M.? The MS. of *Lycidas* preserved at Cambridge is dated November, 1637, but the volume did not appear until a month or two later, about the beginning of 1638. As the printed version shows a few verbal changes, and as the transmission of proofs would be a difficult matter at that time, if Milton were at Horton, as is usually assumed, the inference seems to be that he kept his verses by him for a time, which would fit in with the supposition tentatively made above.

habits of composition. Mr. Verity, after careful examination, states that the MS., which is doubtless the original draft, is full of careful corrections, some of which preceded the issue of 1638, and some of which were made, he is inclined to think, in 1644–45, just before Humphrey Moseley published the first edition of the "Minor Poems." Verse 26 of the poem is cited as an example of Milton's procedure. It stood at first (*i.e.*, in the MS., before Milton corrected it),

"Under the glimmering eyelids of the Morn."

"Glimmering" was corrected to "opening," but in the edition of 1638 the first reading is found. It is clear, therefore, that the correction was made after the poem had been printed at Cambridge.

We are now prepared to consider Milton's contribution to the Cambridge volume in its higher relations as a contribution to English literature, or rather to the small stock of the world's supremely excellent poetry. And, first, as to the poetical category in which it should be placed. Milton himself termed it a "monody," in which he has been followed by Matthew Arnold in his "Thyrsis." Strictly speaking, "Lycidas" is a monody save in the last eight lines, for the rest of the poem is supposed to be sung by one person; the term was also proper from an historical point of view, as it had been applied to funeral songs "uttered by one alone" (Puttenham, "Art of English Poesie," quoted in the "Century Dictionary"). But a division of elegiac poetry that is based on the number of speakers or singers is not satisfactory, and we cannot read far in "Lycidas" without discovering that it is a pastoral poem as well as an elegy. We are therefore compelled to class it as a pastoral elegy, which necessitates some explanatory remarks with regard to the nature and history of this poetical category.[1]

The term "elegy" was applied in classical Greek literature to any poem written in the elegiac couplet, no matter what its subject. Thus the patriotic incitements of Solon received the name as well as the tender complaints of Mimnermus. There had been, of course, from the earliest times songs of grief and lamentation over the dead *e.g.*, the Linus-song of Homer; and after the introduction of the elegy proper from Phrygia, its application to the purposes of a more formal expression of sorrow did not entirely supplant these older *threnoi* or dirges. It was the love-elegy, however, as it had been developed by Mimnermus, rather than the political or social elegy of Solon and

[1] I have derived not a little assistance here from Mr. Jerram's excellent Introduction to his edition of *Lycidas*, but I have depended mainly upon my own studies preparatory to a monograph on "The Elegy in English Literature," which I hope shortly to publish.

Theognis, or the strict elegy of mourning that was especially affected by the Alexandrian literati, when with their thin voices they tried to emulate "that large utterance of the early gods." Such poets as Philetas of Cos developed it, and passed it on to the Romans, among whom it was cultivated with distinguished success by Tibullus and Propertius. With the revival of learning it again made its appearance, taking, indeed, a somewhat wider scope in almost every European literature; but as it was an essentially hot-house product, it made no profound impression anywhere, and practically died out in the last century. The song or poem of grief over the dead could not naturally suffer such a fate. It lived on in the Greek Anthology, in the lyrics of Horace and Catullus, and in the elegiacs of Propertius and Ovid. But among the Alexandrians it had been fortunate enough to receive a setting that to all intents made it a new form of art. It had coalesced with the bucolic idyls of Theocritus, and become what is technically known as the pastoral elegy, which marks the highest point of development reached in the evolution of elegiac poetry.

We cannot enter here into the vexed question of how far Theocritus idealized the life of the Sicilian goat-herds that fills his little pictures. Whatever the material he had to work on, we know that his art was consummate, and that he practically gave the world a new form of poetry just at the time when the learned Alexandrian bards were trying to infuse life into the old forms. He used the metre that had long been devoted to epic or narrative purposes, the hexameter, took his subject-matter from the life that he saw around him, and handled his material in a pictorial way. So in the famous First Idyll, the prototype of "Lycidas," and all other pastoral elegies, he "adopted the language of pastoral lament," to quote Mr. Lang, and "raised the rural dirge for Daphnis," the ideal Greek shepherd, "into the realm of art." He not only refined the language and thoughts of the dirge, but set it in a framework of surpassing pictorial loveliness, thus fusing two poetical *genres* into what may perhaps claim to be a third more beautiful than either of its components. The pastoral elegy was born to a glorious immortality, but Theocritus seems to have cast only one glance on the fairest child of his imagination. Bion, too, essayed but once to win its favors, when he sang the dirge of Adonis; Moschus reserved his wooing to the sad moment when he was called upon to lament the death of his master Bion, the "thrice desired." These three elegies are not merely prototypes, but supreme examples of excellence in their class. When Virgil wrote his "Eclogues," two hundred years later, pastoral poetry of every variety had lost much of the natural simplicity and grace that had at first characterized it, but although it had become an artificial form of expression, it was plainly capable of doing admirable service to any master poet. Virgil, though follow-

ing closely the style of Theocritus with regard to the setting of his pastorals, widened the scope of his subject-matter so as to include even politics, thus becoming the father of the artificial or allegorical pastoral, which has ever since been the prevailing type. This change is not to be wondered at, however, for the Seventh Idyll of Theocritus (in which a Lycidas is a character) had introduced the poet himself under an assumed name, and openly mentioned Philetas and other poets, all of whom were as far removed from real shepherds as the singers in Virgil's "Eclogues" or King and Milton in "Lycidas."

The artificial pastoral, and along with it the pastoral elegy (of which Virgil had given examples in his Fifth and Tenth Eclogues), played no important part in Roman literature after the death of the great Mantuan, nor need we concern ourselves with its fortunes during the Dark and Middle Ages, save to recall, with Mr. Jerram the fact that the Venerable Bede was the author of a Latin eclogue on the Conflict of Winter and Spring. With the revival of learning, however, bucolic poetry of the artificial type came into greater favor than it had ever known, for the same reason probably that had, according to Professor Jebb, made compositions in the elegiac couplet so popular among the Greeks—the comparative ease with which a fair success could be attained in it by uninspired poets.

The modern pastoral seems to have begun in Portugal in or before the fourteenth century and to have been mainly concerned with love. It soon spread to Spain and thence to Italy, where during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries there had been a considerable number of Latin eclogues, often dealing with politics, written by Petrarch and less distinguished poets. It was not until the beginning of the sixteenth century, however, that the Italian pastoral became a type of composition in which all the learned and poetical world desired to excel. France and England caught the infection, but although there are a number of early examples in the latter country, it was not until 1580 that Spenser's "Shepherd's Calendar" broke the poetic interregnum since Chaucer, and acclimated the pastoral in England. Spenser's delightful eclogues, however, differed from their Italian and French models in being more true to rustic life. When later the same poet desired to commemorate the death of Sidney, he chose the pastoral form and wrote his rather unsatisfactory "Astrophel," which was yet no worse than the other pastoral elegies by different hands included in the same collection. The disciples of Spenser, like Phineas Fletcher and Browne, continued the pastoral tradition, and we may perhaps see in this fact a reason why Milton, who always admired Spenser, chose the pastoral elegy as the best mode of expressing regret at the death of his friend. But it is more likely that he was affected by the example of the great Alexandrians, and that

he saw clearly that, if he could succeed in infusing vitality of sentiment into his artificial form of expression, he would achieve greater artistic success than if he should choose a simple type of elegy.[1] We are therefore led to ask whether his sentiments were vital and whether he succeeded in giving them proper utterance in his poem.

Dr. Johnson is not the only critic who has committed the blunder of inferring that Milton felt no true grief at the death of King because he chose the pastoral form for his memorial tribute. He is the most stentorian exponent of this view, however, and his thoughtless statements that "passion runs not after remote allusions and obscure opinions," and that "where there is leisure for fiction there is little grief," may be taken as typical of the sort of criticism that arrogates to itself the possession of common sense. As far as his charge is made against pastoral poetry in general, one needs only to reply, *Solvitur ambulando.* Real and unmistakable personal grief has expressed itself in pastoral form in Moschus's "Elegy on Bion," in Milton's own "Epitaphium Damonis," and in Matthew Arnold's "Thyrsis." The reader who can rise from a perusal of these three poems, whether he knows the causes that led to their composition or not, without feeling that he has been brought in contact with genuine sorrow, is simply lacking in the primary elements of literary discrimination.

Were, now, the emotions sincere that prompted Milton to write "Lycidas?" Unquestionably as sincere, I answer, as the emotions that prompted Shakspere to write his "Sonnets." It is true enough that, as the critics and biographers tell us, we have practically no information as to Milton's relations to King except what we can gain from "Lycidas" itself. King was Milton's junior and had gotten a fellowship over the latter's head; there could, therefore, have been little intimacy between them, say the critics, and besides, Milton does not mention King's death in his letters to Diodati. But one does not need to be intimate with a man in order to be sincere in mourning his loss. Milton knew of King well enough, and he was well aware that the latter was just the sort of man that was needed for the ministry of the Church. "Lycidas" itself is proof sufficient of the interest Milton took in that ministry, and of the scorn he felt for its unworthy representatives; the poem is equal proof of the sincere grief its author felt for the loss of one whom he had known and admired and whom he had believed destined to do a great work within the Christian fold. There was, therefore, in the relations of the two men scope for per-

[1] We lack space to follow out the fortunes of the English pastoral in the hands of Sidney, the Fletchers, Browne, Jonson, Pope, Ramsay, Philips, and Gay.

sonal emotion of a high and pure kind, and this emotion was fused by Milton's artistic skill into a poem which, after a wide course of reading in the class of poetry to which it belongs, I have little hesitation in pronouncing to be the noblest elegy in any language. The subject may be dismissed with the remark that many readers have failed to perceive Milton's sincerity of emotion partly because they are unfamiliar with the conventions of pastoral art, which argues lack of culture, and partly because of a prejudice against artistic conventions in general, which argues a lack of critical discrimination. No art can ever be without its conventions, and if we will stop to analyze, we shall see that the convention that represents two college students as watching flocks and piping songs conflicts little more with our sense of the probability and the fitness of things than the convention that represents a conspirator or would-be murderer on the stage as uttering in soliloquy his most secret thoughts to the blabbing air.

With regard to the particular poems that have been thought to have influenced the poet in the composition of "Lycidas," a few remarks will be sufficient. The three Alexandrian elegies have already been mentioned, and with these may be combined the Fifth and Tenth Eclogues of Virgil. I cannot see that Propertius's beautiful elegy on Paetus (whose fate, by the way, had been similar to that of King), or Ovid's on Tibullus, was at all in Milton's mind. Critics have cited such modern pastorals as the "Alcon," of the Italian poet Castiglione, as having been drawn on for imagery, but I can discover nothing that both poets could not easily have derived from their common sources of inspiration. This seems to be true of Marot's pastoral on the death of Louise of Savoy, and of the eclogue that Spenser modelled on it. The latter poet's "Astrophel" may have had a slight stylistic influence, which is pointed out in the notes; the assumed influence of Ludovick Bryskett's poor pastoral on Sidney will be discussed elsewhere (see note to ll. 1–14). In short, it is easy to conclude that "Lycidas" is unique among modern elegies whether preceding or following; for it would be hard to trace any marked influence exerted by it on "Adonais" or "Thyrsis."

But while we can easily dismiss Milton's relations to modern pastoral poets, we should say a word here about the way he treated his Alexandrian masters. In the first place, he followed Virgil in dropping the refrain, although in the "Epitaphium Damonis," in which the typical pastoral form is more strictly followed, he recurred to this poetic artifice. Secondly, he made little or no attempt in "Lycidas" to paint any of those pretty but elaborate little pictures that gave the Alexandrian Idylls their name—one of which was attempted in the description in the "Epitaphium Damonis" of the *pocula* given him by his Neapolitan friend Manso. For the beautiful invocation to the

nymphs (ll. 50–62) he was indebted to Theocritus rather than to Virgil's Tenth Eclogue; but his substitution of British for classical names was a proof at once of his patriotism and of his invariable habit and power of bettering what he condescended to borrow. Unlike Moschus, he saw no reason to reserve to the last the expression of his personal sorrow, and it is needless to say that the hopelessness of the Greek in the presence of death found no place in his verses.

The influence of the Alexandrian and Virgilian elegies upon particular images and phrases of "Lycidas" is too apparent to require much notice, especially as the matter is treated with considerable fulness in the notes. The name Lycidas itself and those of Damœtas, Amaryllis, and Neæra are all borrowed from these sources. The references to the "hyacinth inscribed with woe," to the grief of the flowers for Lycidas's sake, to the mournful woods and caves and echoes—all suggest the Alexandrian Idylls; and Milton himself confesses the source of much of his inspiration by his invocation of "fountain Arethuse" and "smooth-sliding Mincius," and by his expression "Doric lay." But "Lycidas" has a beauty and passion unknown to its Alexandrian models, and it has not a touch of their oriental effeminacy.

The student will already have gathered that there has been much difference of opinion with regard to the merits of "Lycidas." Dr. Johnson wound up his curiously inept criticism by remarking: "Surely no man could have fancied that he read 'Lycidas' with pleasure had he not known the author." The cold and judicious Hallam wrote on the other hand: "It has been said, I think very fairly, that 'Lycidas' is a good test of real feeling for what is peculiarly called poetry."[1] Mark Pattison practically regarded "Lycidas" as the greatest poem in the language. Dr. Garnett dissents from this view, holding that the beauties of the poem are exquisite rather than magnificent, and that as an elegy it has been surpassed by "Adonais." It seems hard to justify this criticism. Both poems contain exquisite passages, and both contain magnificent passages, but I know of nothing in "Adonais" that is as exquisite as the flower passage in "Lycidas," or as magnificent as the speech of St. Peter, or the picture of the corpse of Lycidas washed by "the shores and sounding seas." Then again, it seems plain that Milton understood better than Shelley the nature of the art-form in which they purposed to cast their thoughts. Shelley's mind was too hazy to enable him to reproduce the pellucid beauty of his Greek originals, and his personifications, though not

[1] "I have been reading *Comus* and *Lycidas* with wonder, and a sort of awe. Tennyson once said that *Lycidas* was a touchstone of poetic taste." Edward FitzGerald to Fanny Kemble, March 26, 1880.

wanting in power, were far from clear-cut. This is not saying, of course, that the "Adonais" is not a great poem, or that it has not a greater historic interest than "Lycidas," and after all any literature may well be proud of possessing two such elegies.

But one might continue to discuss "Lycidas" indefinitely, and a halt must be called somewhere. One might expatiate upon the noble movement of its "free musical paragraphs," to borrow Professor Masson's excellent phrase; one might praise its subtle felicity of diction; one might point to the supreme art displayed in its evolution. It would be interesting, too, to compare it with Milton's other elegiac work, with the verses "On the Death of a Fair Infant," the "Epitaph on the Marchioness of Winchester," etc., and to defend the thesis that if Gray be our typical English elegist, Milton is unquestionably our greatest. It would be pleasant to adduce more arguments in favor of Mr. Pattison's enthusiastic recognition of its merits, and to defend it still more strongly from the charge of being artificial and a mere "study in the pastoral style." It might even be worth while to attempt to show, what most critics have doubted, that the speech of St. Peter is not merely superb in itself but also in harmony with the rest of the poem. But it is never well to overplead one's case, and "Lycidas" is always with us to plead for itself. There remains therefore but one thing to say. "Lycidas" and the "Epitaphium Damonis" mark a great turning point in Milton's career. In the turmoil of public and the sorrows of private life, his mighty spirit was to find other and higher work to perform for the "great Taskmaster's eye." That work will be studied elsewhere; here I have only to express the hope that no student or reader will suffer himself to be so dazzled by the splendor of the poetic achievement of Milton's old age (and dazzled he will be if he approach it with a mind trained in the principles of sound criticism, and unaffected by the shallow and uncultured revolt against classical standards of excellence that is so rife at present) as to be blind to the charm, the blended grace and power that mark the noble poems of his youth that form the basis of this volume. Great even to sublimity is the Milton of "Paradise Lost"

"... from the cheerful ways of men,
Cut off;"

great, too, and matchless in charm is the Milton of "Lycidas:"

"With eager thought warbling his Doric lay."]

In this Monody the Author bewails a learned Friend, unfortunately drowned in his passage from Chester on the Irish Seas, 1637; and, by occasion, foretells the ruin of our corrupted Clergy, then in their height.

YET once more, O ye laurels, and once more,
Ye myrtles brown, with ivy never sere,
I come to pluck your berries harsh and crude,
And with forced fingers rude
Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year.
Bitter constraint, and sad occasion dear,
Compels me to disturb your season due;
For Lycidas is dead, dead ere his prime,
Young Lycidas, and hath not left his peer.
Who would not sing for Lycidas? he knew
Himself to sing, and build the lofty rhyme.
He must not float upon his watery bier
Unwept, and welter to the parching wind,
Without the meed of some melodious tear.
  Begin then, Sisters of the sacred well
That from beneath the seat of Jove doth spring;
Begin, and somewhat loudly sweep the string.
Hence with denial vain and coy excuse—
So may some gentle Muse
With lucky words favor my destined urn,
And as he passes turn,
And bid fair peace be to my sable shroud!
  For we were nursed upon the self-same hill,
Fed the same flock by fountain, shade, and rill;
Together both, ere the high lawns appeared
Under the opening eyelids of the Morn,
We drove a-field, and both together heard
What time the grayfly winds her sultry horn,
Battening our flocks with the fresh dews of night,
Oft till the star that rose at evening bright
Toward heaven's descent had sloped his westering wheel.
Meanwhile the rural ditties were not mute,

Tempered to the oaten flute ;
Rough Satyrs danced, and Fauns with cloven heel
From the glad sound would not be absent long ;
And old Damœtas loved to hear our song.
  But, oh ! the heavy change, now thou art gone,
Now thou art gone and never must return !
Thee, Shepherd, thee the woods and desert caves,
With wild thyme and the gadding vine o'ergrown,
And all their echoes, mourn.
The willows, and the hazel-copses green,
Shall now no more be seen
Fanning their joyous leaves to thy soft lays.
As killing as the canker to the rose,
Or taint-worm to the weanling herds that graze,
Or frost to flowers, that their gay wardrobe wear,
When first the white-thorn blows ;
Such, Lycidas, thy loss to shepherd's ear.
  Where were ye, Nymphs, when the remorseless deep
Closed o'er the head of your loved Lycidas ?
For neither were ye playing on the steep,
Where your old bards, the famous Druids, lie,
Nor on the shaggy top of Mona high,
Nor yet where Deva spreads her wizard stream.
Ay me ! I fondly dream !
Had ye been there—for what could that have done ?
What could the Muse herself that Orpheus bore,
The Muse herself, for her enchanting son,
Whom universal nature did lament,
When, by the rout that made the hideous roar,
His gory visage down the stream was sent,
Down the swift Hebrus to the Lesbian shore ?
  Alas ! what boots it with uncessant care
To tend the homely slighted shepherd's trade,
And strictly meditate the thankless Muse ?
Were it not better done, as others use,
To sport with Amaryllis in the shade,

Or with the tangles of Neæra's hair?
Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise
(That last infirmity of noble mind)
To scorn delights and live laborious days;
But the fair guerdon when we hope to find,
And think to burst out into sudden blaze,
Comes the blind Fury with the abhorrèd shears,
And slits the thin-spun life. "But not the praise,"
Phœbus replied, and touched my trembling ears:
"Fame is no plant that grows on mortal soil,
Nor in the glistering foil
Set off to the world, nor in broad rumor lies,
But lives and spreads aloft by those pure eyes
And perfect witness of all-judging Jove;
As he pronounces lastly on each deed,
Of so much fame in Heaven expect thy meed."
O fountain Arethuse, and thou honored flood,
Smooth-sliding Mincius, crowned with vocal reeds,
That strain I heard was of a higher mood;
But now my oat proceeds,
And listens to the Herald of the Sea,
That came in Neptune's plea.
He asked the waves, and asked the felon winds,
What hard mishap hath doomed this gentle Swain?
And questioned every gust of rugged wings
That blows from off each beakèd promontory.
They knew not of his story;
And sage Hippotadès their answer brings,
That not a blast was from his dungeon strayed:
The air was calm, and on the level brine
Sleek Panopè with all her sisters played.
It was that fatal and perfidious bark,
Built in the eclipse, and rigged with curses dark,
That sunk so low that sacred head of thine.
Next, Camus, reverend Sire, went footing slow,
His mantle hairy, and his bonnet sedge
Inwrought with figures dim, and on the edge

Like to that sanguine flower inscribed with woe.
"Ah! who hath reft," quoth he, "my dearest pledge?"
Last came, and last did go,
The Pilot of the Galilean Lake;
Two massy keys he bore of metals twain
(The golden opes, the iron shuts amain).
He shook his mitred locks, and stern bespake:—
"How well could I have spared for thee, young Swain,
Enow of such as for their bellies' sake
Creep, and intrude, and climb into the fold!
Of other care they little reckoning make
Than how to scramble at the shearers' feast,
And shove away the worthy bidden guest.
Blind mouths! that scarce themselves know how to hold
A sheep-hook, or have learnt aught else the least
That to the faithful herdman's art belongs!
What recks it them? What need they? They are sped;
And, when they list, their lean and flashy songs
Grate on their scrannel pipes of wretched straw:
The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed,
But, swoln with wind and the rank mist they draw,
Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread;
Besides what the grim wolf with privy paw
Daily devours apace, and nothing said.
But that two-handed engine at the door
Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more."
Return, Alphéus, the dread voice is past
That shrunk thy streams; return, Sicilian Muse,
And call the vales, and bid them hither cast
Their bells and flowerets of a thousand hues.
Ye valleys low, where the mild whispers use
Of shades, and wanton winds, and gushing brooks,
On whose fresh lap the swart star sparely looks,
Throw hither all your quaint enamelled eyes,
That on the green turf suck the honeyed showers,
And purple all the ground with vernal flowers.
Bring the rathe primrose that forsaken dies,

The tufted crow-toe, and pale jessamine,
The white pink, and the pansy freaked with jet,
The glowing violet,
The musk-rose, and the well-attired woodbine,
With cowslips wan that hang the pensive head,
And every flower that sad embroidery wears;
Bid amaranthus all his beauty shed,
And daffadillies fill their cups with tears,
To strew the laureate hearse where Lycid lies.
For so, to interpose a little ease,
Let our frail thoughts dally with false surmise—
Ay me! whilst thee the shores and sounding seas
Wash far away—where'er thy bones are hurled—
Whether beyond the stormy Hebrides,
Where thou perhaps, under the whelming tide,
Visit'st the bottom of the monstrous world;
Or whether thou, to our moist vows denied,
Sleep'st by the fable of Bellerus old,
Where the great Vision of the guarded Mount
Looks toward Namancos and Bayona's hold:—
Look homeward, Angel, now, and melt with ruth,
And, O ye dolphins, waft the hapless youth.
Weep no more, woeful shepherds, weep no more,
For Lycidas, your sorrow, is not dead,
Sunk though he be beneath the watery floor;
So sinks the day-star in the ocean bed,
And yet anon repairs his drooping head,
And tricks his beams, and with new-spanglèd ore,
Flames in the forehead of the morning sky.
So Lycidas sunk low, but mounted high,
Through the dear might of Him that walked the waves,
Where, other groves and other streams along,
With nectar pure his oozy locks he laves,
And hears the unexpressive nuptial song,
In the blest kingdoms meek of joy and love.
There entertain him all the Saints above,

In solemn troops and sweet societies,
That sing, and singing in their glory move,
And wipe the tears forever from his eyes.
Now, Lycidas, the shepherds weep no more;
Henceforth thou art the Genius of the shore,
In thy large recompense, and shalt be good
To all that wander in that perilous flood.

Thus sang the uncouth Swain to the oaks and rills,
While the still Morn went out with sandals gray;
He touched the tender stops of various quills,
With eager thought warbling his Doric lay;
And now the sun had stretched out all the hills,
And now was dropt into the western bay;
At last he rose, and twitched his mantle blue:
To-morrow to fresh woods, and pastures new.

NOTES

L'ALLEGRO

1–10. In these lines Milton naturally and forcibly makes room for cheerfulness by banishing Melancholy to a congenial abode of darkness after he has loaded her with opprobrious imprecations. The metrical form employed, a combination of trimeters and pentameters, is admirably adapted to the poet's purpose. It is properly exchanged for a lighter and more alluring measure in the invocation that follows.

2. *Cerberus* was the dog of Pluto and guardian of Hades. He is usually described as having had three heads and a serpent's tail. Being himself the offspring, along with the Hydra, of the union of the monster Echidna with the giant Typhon, he is appropriately taken by Milton as the father of Melancholy. A mother suitable to the spirit, if not to the letter, of classical mythology, from which of course the underlying conception of this and other similar genealogies is borrowed, is found in "blackest midnight;" and a fit place of birth in the "Stygian cave forlorn." *Cf. Paradise Lost*, ii., 655.

3. *Stygian cave forlorn* refers to the den of Cerberus beyond the Styx (Virgil, *Aeneid*, vi., 418), the celebrated river encircling Hades, over which Charon ferried the souls of the dead and by which the gods themselves swore inviolable oaths. See *Classical Dictionary*.

4. *Shapes*. The very indefiniteness of this word and of "sights unholy" adds to the effectiveness of the description. *Unholy* has been paraphrased as "impure," but seems equivalent to "hellish."

5. *Uncouth cell*. "Uncouth" here, as elsewhere in Milton, appears to combine its original sense of "unknown" (it contains the past participle of O. E. *cunnan*, to know, from which we have "ken" and "can"), with its derived meaning of "ugly," "repulsive." See the *Century Dictionary* for this word and "forlorn" (l. 3), both once participles, now adjectives. *Cf. Lycid.*, l. 186. *Cell* conveys the idea of a confined or narrow place of retirement. *Cf. Il Pens.*, l. 169., *Nat. Ode*, l. 180.

7. *Night-raven*. As the raven is not a night-bird, the owl, night-heron, etc., have been suggested to explain this verse; but Milton probably meant the raven. See Spenser, *Shepherd's Calendar*, *Ecl.* vi. and "glosse."

8. *Low browed rocks.* Pope uses this expression in his *Eloisa to Abelard*, l. 244. He also employs the "low-thoughted" of *Comus*, l. 6, in l. 298 of the same poem, and in l. 20 writes "shagged with horrid thorns" for Milton's "shagg'd with horrid shades" (*Comus*, l. 429. See also *Pardise Regained*, i., 296).

10. *Cimmerian desert.* The Cimmerians were a people mentioned by Homer (*Odyssey*, xi., 14) as dwelling at the "ends of deep-streaming Ocean," in a settled state (δῆμος τε πόλις τε), "covered by gloom and cloud." "Never upon them doth the shining sun look down with his beams either when he mounts toward the starry heaven, or when again he turns from heaven his course to earth, but destroying night is extended over the wretched mortals." This description, the simplicity of which should be contrasted with Milton's more elaborate and less effective lines, has so impressed the imagination of subsequent generations that the phrase "Cimmerian darkness" has been proverbial for ages. Ancient writers sought to fix the habitation of the mythical people, and placed it in Italy, Spain, or the Tauric Chersonese, finding, indeed, in the latter region (now the Crimea) a nomadic people actually existing who may by remote possibility have furnished Homer with a hint for his conception of an ordered nation dwelling under the sway of perpetual night. Milton by his use of "desert" seems to have the historic Cimmerians partly in mind. When he employs the epithet "Cimmerian" after "dark," he is guilty of no tautology, but is simply adding an epithet that will intensify the darkness he has so insisted upon throughout his description. The whole passage, placing the "uncouth cell" in "dark Cimmerian desert," describing darkness, like some huge bat-like bird (*cf. Comus*, ll. 251–2) brooding (*i.e.*, hovering) over the lothsome retreat and guarding it "with jealous wings," while the portentous "night-raven" croaks ("sings"), and the black shades and threatening rocks offer their grim welcome to a visitor whose very looks seem to partake of their own repulsive nature, is a superb example of poetic elaboration, foreshadowing the "grand style" of which Milton is so consummate a master.

11–24. These lines invoking "heart-easing Mirth" and giving her parentage, are appropriately composed in the tripping octosyllabic couplets that are used throughout the remainder of the poem as well as in the bulk of *Il Penseroso*, in the lyric parts of *Comus*, and in the *Epitaph on the Marchioness of Winchester*. It will be noted that in this measure, in which the Elizabethans did some of their best work, Milton allows himself the frequent use of one or more seven-syllabled lines, thus obtaining not merely a trochaic effect, but also a variety, swiftness, and directness of movement which few modern poets who have attempted the same verse-form have been able to equal. The

fatal facility with which the measure degenerates into doggerel has been often pointed out, but, like all great artists, Milton can obtain some of his best effects from the use of forms which in the hands of minor artists lend themselves only too frequently to the production of the commonplace.

12. *Y-clept Euphrosynè*, *i.e.*, called Euphrosyne, who was one of the three Graces, daughters of Zeus or Bacchus, who presided over the kind offices or charities of life. Hence their name *Charites*. Euphrosyne was the *cheerful* Grace, her sisters, Aglaia and Thalia, were *bright* and *blooming* respectively. They constantly attended their mother Venus, and Horace has described them for all time as "gratiæ decentes" (*Odes*, I., iv., 6). Milton follows the least common of the much mixed classical genealogies and then furnishes Euphrosyne with a more ideal and unique one of his own making, the West Wind and the Goddess of the Dawn being more likely to produce a pure and ethereal offspring than the God of Wine and the Goddess of Love. The first genealogy is given in Servius on *Aeneid* i., 720 (Keightley quoted by Browne). *Y-clept* is the past participle of the obsolete "to clepe" (O. E., *clipian*, to call). For the change from the prefix *ge* to *y* or *i*, see Lounsbury's *Hist. of the Eng. Lang.*, pp. 387–389 (rev. ed.). For the use of similar words by the Elizabethans, see Abbott's *Shaksperian Grammar*, § 345.

13. *Heart-easing*. Milton's use of compound epithets has been made the subject of much comment and is worthy of serious study. Many subsequent poets, Collins and Gray especially, have imitated him and borrowed from him, but no one, not even Tennyson, has equalled him. The student will find it interesting and profitable to observe how and in what proportions the various parts of speech are combined by the poet, as well as to note the special poetic effect of the epithets so formed.

14. *At a birth*. *A* is a shortened form of *an* (*one*).

17. *Or whether* (*as some sager sing*). The construction is changed here, although the meaning is not obscured. To have continued the construction would have involved the use of some such phrase as "whom else," which might well have led to a weakening of the verse. The meaning of the parenthesis is "as some wiser poets sing." *Sager* may, of course, be taken as an adverb in the comparative, equivalent to "more wisely, but this view deprives the word of much of its poetic *timbre*. Bell suggests that as it is not known to what poets Milton refers, he may be merely "modestly recommending his own view." In this sense the expression becomes slightly humorous, although humor is not a conspicuous ingredient in Milton's character. I am not sure but that Milton may have been thinking of Ben Jonson when he wrote "sager," for, although I have not found this genealogy

in Jonson, there are two masques of his, *The Penates* and *The Vision of Delight*, in which Zephyr and Aurora are introduced, along with Flora, who is represented as the Wind's sweetheart. Milton may merely have remembered the association of the two, and intended to apply the compliment loosely. I notice that Mr. Verity seems to incline to this opinion. *Cf. Paradise Lost*, v., 16.

18. *Frolic*, frolicsome. *Breathes* is here used transitively. *Cf.* notes to *Il Pens.*, ll. 133 and 151.

20. *A-maying.* The *a* in this and similar phrases, like "a-fishing," is a weakening of the preposition "on," the second portion of the phrase being therefore a verbal noun. The reference to the games and sports, ancient and modern, called forth by balmy May is of course apparent, the subject being a familiar one with English poets from Chaucer to Tennyson. This very phrase is used in one of the songs in the first masque of Jonson's named above. *Once* is equivalent to the "once upon a time" of the fairy stories.

22. *Cf.* Shakspere, *The Taming of the Shrew*, II., i., 173–4:

"I'll say she looks as clear
As morning roses newly washed with dew."

Cf. also Tennyson's *Dream of Fair Women*, 14 (Verity).

24. *Buxom*, etc. *Cf.* with this often-quoted verse, *Il. Pens.*, l. 32, and l. 23 in the Prologue to Shakspere's *Pericles*, Act I., that runs:

"So buxom, blithe, and full of face.".

Browne quotes from Burton's *Anat. of Mel.:*

"That was so fine, so fair,
So blithe, so debonaire."

Todd quotes from T. Randolph's *Aristippus* a verse in which the same three epithets appear in a slightly changed order. But whether Milton recalled these lines when he wrote is more than doubtful, and, after all, *we quote Milton.* The line as it stands is about equivalent to "full of life, joy, and easy grace." *Buxom* originally meant "obedient;" now it implies a hearty comeliness. *Debonair* (French, *de bon air*), of good mien or manners. See Skeat's *Etymological Dictionary* for these and other words of interest. A study of epithets is especially important to the student who would form a good style and learn to appreciate the finer shades of criticism.

25–40. Although the passage formed by these lines does not end with a full stop, there is a considerable change of thought introduced with the 41st verse, which warrants a break in the analysis. The

poet now continues his invocation of Mirth with greater insistance, and describes her customary companions, whom she is requested to bring with her. Commentators have noted a curious parallelism between ll. 26–30 and some Latin verses of George Buchanan's, which Milton may probably have recalled. The germ of the idea is in Statius *Sylv.*, I., vi. 6–7, and in Horace's

"Sive tu mavis, Erycina ridens,
Quam Jocus circum volat et Cupido."
(*Odes*, I., ii., 33–34.)

25. *Haste thee, Nymph.* Here "thee" may be used reflexively, but its use differs little, if at all, from that common in Elizabethan English after an imperative, "thee" in such expressions as "look thee," "speed thee," being practically equivalent to "thou." See Abbott, § 212. "Nymph" is an appropriate appellation in view of the genealogies given of Mirth; it also brings out the latter's open-air qualities, if we may so speak.

27. *Quips and Cranks and wanton Wiles.* "Quip" (*cf.* "whip") conveys the idea of a sharp, clever saying which here, though not always, must possess no sting. *Crank* is a "twist" or "turn" of speech with something humorous or grotesque about it, a notion which is also associated with our colloquial "crank," although the different derivation of the latter word is to be noted. See *Century Dictionary*. *Wanton Wiles*, playful or merry tricks; the idea of cunning involved in *Wiles* is given an innocent and pleasant sense by the juxtaposition of the idea of sportiveness involved in *wanton*. This last word is frequently used in a bad sense more consonant with its derivation.

28. *Nods and Becks.* Alluring signs with head and fingers are naturally characteristic of the Nymph of Cheerfulness. So are *wreathèd* smiles, especially when they are of such sort as *hang on Hebe's cheek*. *Cf.* with Milton's beautiful reference to smiles and dimples Tasso, *Aminta*, I., i., 7–8. Warton compares a stanza in Burton's *Anatomy* and asserts that Milton took thence l. 28. Such positive assertions are very rash. Nods and becks and smiles might occur in combination to any poet. While the relative clauses in ll. 29–30 are strictly connected with "smiles," Milton must have summed up "nods," and "becks" and "smiles" as proper accompaniments of cheerfulness in some ideal personage like Hebe.

29. *Hebe*, the goddess of youth, who ministered nectar to the gods.

30. *Sleek*, soft, as in a "sleek skin," with a possible allusion to the secondary meaning, "sly" or "arch."

31. *Care* is of course the direct object of *derides*.

33. *You.* The whole company is expected to dance.

34. *Fantastic.* The toe in dancing is probably described by this adjective because its movement is regarded as more or less ordered by the fancy, *i.e.*, as "improvised." The poetical effectiveness of this epithet and of "wreathèd" (above) should be observed. *Cf. Comus*, l. 144.

36. *Liberty.* Bell notes that in Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* there is a chapter entitled, "Loss of Liberty as a Cause of Melancholy;" if this idea be followed out, Mirth could bring with her no more congenial companion. *In thy right hand* indicates the post of honor assigned to Liberty. The student of history will see at once the force of the expression *mountain-nymph,* and will recall Wordsworth's noble sonnet, *Thought of a Briton on the Subjugation of Switzerland.* Warton, however, thought Milton merely meant to call Liberty an Oread, and we may be reading modern notions into the lines.

38. *Admit me of thy crew.* Give me admission to thy company. Note the poetical effect produced by conciseness of statement and the use of a familiar word in a somewhat unusual sense.

40. *Unreprovèd,* unreprovable. The passive participle was frequently used by the Elizabethans as equivalent to an adjective in "—able." See Abbott, § 375. Here, too, the gain in concision and loss of precision involved in the choice of epithets, as well as the postpositive position of "free," being contrary to the usage of prose, are specially appropriate to poetry. The arrangement of the adjectives here employed—one before and one after the noun—is very common in Milton. It seems to be of Greek origin, and the second adjective frequently appears to qualify the idea conveyed by the first adjective and noun combined.

41–68. This passage, which completes the grammatical sentence begun in l. 33, describes by a series of exquisite though unelaborated pictures the pleasures of a cheerful man abroad early on a delightful morning. It is plain from several verses (53 and 89 among others) and from the association of pictures belonging to various seasons of the year, that Milton is describing an ideal day, rather than one belonging to a particular season. Minute critics have succeeded in showing that some of the pictures are not entirely true to nature; but they waste their time, for Milton has surely imbibed nature's spirit, and his poem lives, as all true poetry does, by the spirit rather than by the letter. Browne has a very similar, but not so beautiful, description in *Britannia's Pastorals*, II., iv., 483 *seq.* (Warton.)

41. *To hear* may be explained as an infinitive of purpose dependent upon "admit," like "to live," in l. 38; but as the whole passage is practically but an expansion of the expression "unreprovèd pleasures free," it would seem best to take "to hear" and "to come," l. 45, as infinitives in apposition to "pleasures."

42. *Dull* is a very appropriate epithet for night when the character of L'Allegro is considered. Il Penseroso could not have used it consistently. This description of the lark naturally suggests comparison with what other poets have sung about the same bird. Wordsworth, Shelley, and more recently, Mr. William Watson, have made it the subject of well-known poems, which the pupil should read; but he should commit to memory and keep by him forever those divine lines from Shakspere's 29th Sonnet that run,

> "Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising,
> Haply I think on thee, and then my state,
> Like to the lark at break of day arising
> From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate."

Even Milton's genius pales before these flawless and unapproachable verses. *Cf. Paradise Regained*, ii., 279–81.

44. *Dapplèd.* Connected with "dip" and "dimple," hence the idea of "spotted." It is usually associated with gray, so we have the expression "dapple-gray." Warton quotes Shakspere's "*Dapples* the drowsy east with spots of gray," *Much Ado*, V., iii., 27. From this verb we get "dappled," *i.e.*, "covered with small spots of gray cloud," referring to the sky at dawn. It is to be noted that Milton in many cases chooses to sound the *ed* in such verbs rather than to sound a vowel before the liquid, *i.e.*, dapplèd, not dappel'd.

45. *To come.* The four lines introduced by this infinitive (see note to l. 41) have occasioned commentators not a little discussion. Who or what is the subject of "to come." Some say the lark, others L'Allegro himself. The latter aver that it is contrary to a lark's habits to come down from "his watch-tower in the skies" and "bid good-morrow," even at the window of so congenial a companion as the poet Milton, whom we may identify for the nonce with the cheerful man. The former affirm that Milton is not a strictly accurate observer of nature, and that he was thinking rather of the poetry implicit in his idea. They therefore make "become" dependent on "to hear," like "startle," and explain the unusual "to" by the fact that "become" is too far away from "to hear" to be able to omit the usual infinitive sign. They then have to explain the phrase "in spite of sorrow," as meaning that the lark comes down to Milton's window and sings in order to defy or spite sorrow, of course the sorrow of some one else than L'Allegro or the bird itself. This seems far-fetched, whereas if the view that it is L'Allegro who goes to his window and bids good-morrow be accepted, the phrase is capable of fairly satisfactory explanation. It is surely in keeping with L'Allegro's character to approach his casement, drawn thither by the lark's song, and salute the rising morn or the new day with the manifold pleasures it has in store

for him (this object of his salutation being omitted without too great loss of clearness); and he can do this "in spite of sorrow," that is, despite the sorrow or evil chances that any day, no matter how fairly it begins, may have in store even for the most cheerful optimist. The commentators who, like Professor Hales, cannot accept this obvious explanation of the lines should ask themselves further what propriety there was in Milton's referring, some verses below, to the cock's strutting before his hens, unless the poet was at *his* window to *see* the performance. But we get him to the window by making him the subject of "to come." This view removes all suspicion that Milton inserted a phrase for the sake of a rhyme, or that he was thoughtless enough to describe something that could not possibly happen in a poem chiefly remarkable for its descriptions. That the passage is obscure must be admitted, but it is obscure through compression, which is characteristic of Milton's art, while padding and slipshodness never are. It may be remarked, finally, that Masson's idea that the poet has begun his walk, and says "good-morrow" from outside the window to others of his family, is hardly tenable.

47. *Sweet-briar*. This is the eglantine or wild-rose, and the *twisted eglantine* of the next verse has been thought to be the honeysuckle, as the real eglantine is not "twisted."

50. *Thin* probably limits the whole phrase "rear of darkness," in which "rear" seems to have its military signification. This would make "thin" nearly equivalent to "straggling," which is not far from its meaning, if it be held to limit "darkness" alone. (Bell.)

53. *Listening* refers to L'Allegro himself, and its introduction is less abrupt if the explanation given above of "to come" be accepted; for it will then be used to limit the subject (understood) of the nearest main statement, which is practically made by this much discussed infinitive. The clause introduced by "*how*" may be regarded as the object of the mental operation inherent in "listening."

54. *Cheerly*, cheerfully.

55. *Hoar* may be taken to mean gray through mist or distance, or it may mean literally that the hill is white with frost in the early morning, which is likely, since such mornings are most suitable for hunting; or finally, it may be nearly equivalent to old or immemorial, which is hardly probable. The whole line and the next may mean either that the music of hound and horn echoes shrill through the high wood on the hillside, or that the huntsmen and dogs begin on the hillside and then go "echoing" through the "high wood" (*i.e.*, a wood with tall trees cleared of underbrush: French *futaie*, as opposed to *bois*). The latter interpretation seems the more poetical, as the elements of time and motion are introduced; it also throws an ictus on "high" that improves the verse metrically.

57. *Sometime* (printed originally as two words) seems slightly different in meaning here from the adverbial genitive "sometimes." It appears to imply "for a space" (of time). See, however, note to *Il Pens.*, l. 97. *Walking.* See "listening," l. 53. *Not unseen.* The cheerful man loves to see and be seen, even if he does not have speech with his kind. *Cf. Il Pens.*, l. 65 and note. Burton's *Abstract of Melancholy*, prefixed to his *Anatomy*, has the following stanza, which may be profitably compared here:

"When to myself I act and smile,
With pleasing thoughts the time beguile,
By a brook side or wood so green,
Unheard, unsought for, or unseen,
A thousand pleasures do me bless,
And crown my soul with happiness.
All my joys besides are folly,
None so sweet as melancholy."

See Introductory Note to L'Allegro, p. 2.

59. *Right against*, etc., modifies "walking" and is equivalent to "toward the sunrise." Gray has lifted this line bodily to his *Descent of Odin.*

60. *State*, stately march or pomp.

61. *Amber*, amber-colored, *i.e.*, yellowish and translucent.

62. *The clouds in thousand liveries dight* is an absolute construction, equivalent to "the clouds being clad in numerous liveries." *Liveries* seems to be plainly used of the clouds because they are regarded as servants or attendants of the sun, not because of the various hues displayed. *Cf. Paradise Lost*, iv., 598–9. *Thousand* is here not a definite number, and has more poetical force than if some such prosaic word as "countless" had been used. *Cf. Comus*, l. 205. *Dight*, which is nearly obsolete, is in its origin almost equal to "prepared," "arranged." *Cf. Il Pens.*, l. 159.

65. *Blithe.* Here, as frequently (*cf.* "shrill," l. 56), the adjective used as adverb does not lose much of its adjectival sense, and still points to a quality inherent in the subject. Notice the brisk movement of these closing lines, obtained by the repetition of "and" and the use of seven-syllabled verses.

67. *Tells his tale*, counts the number of his flock. O. E. *talu* meant a number; hence *tellan*, to count, from which the modern meanings of the words are easily derived. Milton can hardly mean that *all* the shepherds gather under a tree at such an early hour to amuse themselves by telling stories. Warton explains the passage correctly in a note which shows curiously how much a century has done

to increase the knowledge of the history of our tongue. But *cf. Nat. Ode*, l. 87.

69–99. This passage describes the pleasures of being abroad on a bright noonday and afternoon. The description is effected by the same swift succession of unelaborated pictures.

69. *Straight*, straightway. The "new pleasures" are the "russet lawns," "fallows gray," "mountains," etc., that follow.

70. *Landskip round*, the landscape stretching on all sides. "Round" may be taken as an adverb modifying "measures," but this view seems to sacrifice somewhat of poetic effect. *Cf.* note to *Comus*, l. 935, and *Paradise Regained*, iii., 418.

71. *Russet lawns and fallows gray*, reddish brown open spaces and gray unsown fields. Mr. Verity, however, gives good reasons for holding that here "russet" is equivalent to "gray." The history of "fallow," which has now lost its signification of "pale-colored," and so requires the addition of "gray," should be looked up by the pupil. The word was often used by O. E. poets with reference to the sea. The derivation of "lawn" is disputed, but the student should be careful not to give the word its restricted modern meaning.

74. *Laboring*, big with rain. Of course, Milton does not mean to imply that the clouds threaten rain on any particular morning, or that there are mountains around Horton.

75. *Trim*, well kept. *Cf. Il Pens.*, l. 50. *Pied*, variegated like a magpie, a frequent epithet in poetry.

78. *Bosomed*, *i.e.*, contained in the midst of. *Cf. Comus*, l. 368 and *The Passion*, l. 53. *Tufted*, refers to the fact that the foliage of the trees spreading loosely might be likened to a "tuft" of grass or feathers. *Cf.* "the tufted crow-toe," *Lycid.*, l. 143; also *Comus*, l. 225. Hills are sometimes described as "tufted" with trees.

79. *Beauty lies;* some beautiful young woman of distinction dwells. *Cf.* Shelley's "Like a high-born maiden In a palace tower." Windsor Castle is probably alluded to in the passage.

80. *The cynosure of neighboring eyes.* One of the most familiar lines of the poem. "Cynosure" refers to something that attracts great interest. In Greek it meant "dog's tail," and was used to describe and point out the stars composing the tail of the Lesser Bear, the last of which is the pole star, by which Phœnician sailors were wont to steer (Skeat). See note to *Comus*, l. 341.

83. *Corydon* and the other names here introduced are of frequent occurrence in the pastoral poems of Theocritus, Virgil, and their imitators. See *Lycidas* and *Comus*, passim.

85. *Messes*, dishes.

87. *Bower* would not be used now of a cottage, but of either an arbor or a lady's chamber. *Cf. Il Pens.*, l. 104; *Comus*, l. 46.

90. Supply "she goes."

91. "*Sometimes*" here indicates a change in the time of day. *Secure* is used in its original (Latin) sense of "free from care."

92. *Upland hamlets*, out-of-the-way villages or clusters of "little homes" This use of "upland" is seen in the title of Alexander Barclay's eclogue, *The Cytezen and Uplondyshman*." M. Arnold uses the word twice in *Thyrsis*, but with not quite the present connotation.

94. *Jocund*. The merriment or pleasure implied in this word (Latin *jocundus*) is transferred from the dancers to the instrument that furnishes their music — a kind of fiddle. *Rebeck* was originally a Persian word and was quite common in our old poets, as Warton has shown.

96. *Chequered* is a very picturesque epithet, bringing out the play of lights and shadows on the green over which the dancers are tripping.

97. Bell makes this line read, "And (to) young and old (who have) come forth to play," the whole therefore depending on "rebeck's sound." It seems simpler, however, to insert a second "when" and take "come" as an indicative, not as a participle. Read in this sense, the lines appear to move more swiftly, and to separate more sharply the children and old people from the youth of both sexes. Browne's punctuation is in accordance with the latter explanation. *Cf.* l. 98 with *Comus*, l. 959.

100–116. These lines describe the pleasure to be had in listening to rustic tales told before an open fire.

100. *Spicy nut-brown ale*, "a drink composed of hot ale, nutmeg, sugar, toast, and roasted crabs or apples." (Bell, after Warton.)

102. *Faery Mab*. Mercutio's description of Queen Mab (*Romeo and Juliet*, I., iv., 53–95) as the bestower of dreams should be consulted by the pupil, as well as the opening passages of Shelley's *Queen Mab*, which contain some beautiful poetry and nothing anti-theological. *Junkets*. Here, any sort of sweetmeats. Originally a kind of cream-cheese, served up on rushes, the Italian *giunco*, a rush, furnishing its name. (Skeat.) *Eat* is preterite but must be made to rhyme with "feat."

103. The pronouns in this and the following line indicate exchange of experiences between the male and female servants. Fairies were supposed to pinch lazy menials.

104. The construction is awkward here but is improved by putting a semicolon after "led." The same, or another, "he" may then be taken as the subject of "tells." Milton saw the awkwardness of his phraseology and made the line read, in the edition of 1673,

"And by the Friar's Lanthorn led;"

but a subject must still be supplied for "tells," and it seems better to retain the masculine pronoun in order to add variety to the dialogue or monologue. *Friar's Lantern* appears to be the Will-o'-the-wisp or Jack-o'-lantern, but how the expression arose is still in doubt, unless there is a confusion with Friar Rush, a spirit that haunted houses. Several editors follow Keightley in charging Milton with this confusion (a charge which would probably have only drawn a smile from him), but Mr. Verity thinks that "Friar" simply refers to the "goblin" of l. 105. He shows that Robin Goodfellow, the goblin referred to, was spoken of as "the Friar," and that Burton is authority for the existence of other spirits besides Jack-o'-lantern, who mislead by the use of false lights. But this explanation does not explain, for supposing that we have only one speaker, how could she with propriety be represented in one verse as being mis-"led" by the tricksy sprite and in the next as engaging him in her service? Besides, the introduction of "tells" evidently favors the idea that there is a new speaker at l. 104, and, as we have seen above, it is better to have this speaker a man. *Cf.* as to Jack-o'-Lantern, *Paradise Lost*, ix., 634–42.

105. *Drudging goblin*, an imaginary being supposed to haunt dark places, especially the bowels of the earth. Synonyms are elf, gnome, the German Kobold (a different word probably), and, in English folk-lore, Robin Goodfellow, Hobgoblin, or Puck. Warton quotes Burton, *Anat. of Mel.*, I., ii.: "A bigger kind there is of them (*i.e.*, terrestrial demons) called with us *hobgoblins* and Robin Goodfellows, that would in those superstitious times grind corn *for a mess of milk*, cut wood, or do any manner of *drudgery* work, . . . to draw water, dress meat, or any such thing." Shakspere's Puck describes himself in *Mid. Night's Dream*, II., i., 42–57.

110. *Lubber*, a clumsy, strong fellow, may go along with "fiend" (which must be pronounced so as to rhyme with "end"), but hardly sorts with our notion of a fairy such as Robin Goodfellow was. It is not so much out of place with a goblin, however, especially with one capable of doing the work described. Shakspere uses "lob," a kindred word, with reference to Puck. Warton's reference to Lob-lie-by-the-fire, a giant mentioned by Fletcher (*Knight of the B. P.*) seems far-fetched.

113. *Crop-full* refers properly to birds. Here it means "satiated with food," "with full stomach." Note the force of "flings," which has been traced to an old song of Puck.

114. *Matin* is French for morning. Here it means the cock's salutation to the morning. *Cf.* "matins." Ghosts and spirits departed at cock-crow. See note to *Comus*, l. 432.

117–152. In this passage the cheerful man quits the company of men and retires to that of books and music in order to close his de-

lightful day, the pleasures of which conspire to determine him to live with Mirth if she can give them permanently. This at any rate is the usual interpretation, for the poet does not provide any means to transport L'Allegro to the city except the use of the latter's imagination in reading. Besides, if the contests of wit and arms are understood to refer to the problematic courts of love and tournaments, it is hard to see how L'Allegro could witness these at night, or the former, at least, at any time in the seventeenth century, without reading about them in some old romance. Then, too, Milton may have wished to contrast the kinds of reading done by his two ideal men. See *Il Pens.*, ll. 85–120. It must be noticed, too, that in *Il Penseroso*, although we are given accessories of study, such as the "lamp at midnight hour," there is no actual mention of books, and we have "gorgeous Tragedy" sweeping by as vividly as though Il Penseroso were sitting at the Globe watching a play of Shakspere's. If the more serious poem were written first, this vivid method of describing the reading done would be employed in *L'Allegro*. There is, further, every dramatic propriety in representing the cheerful man as interesting himself first in tales of folk-lore, then in romances of chivalry. Mr. Verity argues forcibly against this view of the passage, which is championed by Professor Masson. He claims rightly that it is more natural for L'Allegro to prefer seeing the sights of a city to reading about them, and he thinks that Milton intended to contrast, not the kinds of reading done by his ideal men, but their reading and not reading. As Mr. Verity does not believe that Milton intended to describe an ideal day, he is not concerned to show how L'Allegro is to get to the city, but the critic who can escape the conviction that Milton meant to describe an ideal day is a hard person to argue with. The objection with regard to the possibility of seeing courts of love in Milton's day might be met by urging that the poet is simply describing court life in high-flown language; that he may, indeed, be referring to balls and other entertainments, just as he actually does to masques and plays. Yet Mr. Verity holds that the lines in question "paint in miniature a typical scene of mediæval chivalry" (!) Ll. 129–130 are, however, hardly as much in keeping with this view as they are with the idea that L'Allegro, or Milton, will read at night what he has dreamed about at noonday. But, after all, I must confess that I should prefer to get L'Allegro to the city in person, and that I do it whenever I read the poem uncritically. *Cf.*, as to Milton's own theatre-going, his first Latin elegy (translated by Cowper).

119. *Barons bold.* *Cf.* Gray's *Bard*, "Girt with many a baron bold."

120. *Weeds*, originally garments in general, now only those of a widow. *High triumphs*, *i.e.*, public entertainments like masques, tournaments, etc. *Cf.* the Roman use of the word.

121. *Store of*, abundance of, many. The expression is more poetical than if a common adjective or noun of number had been used. *Cf.* the O. E. use of *hêap*, "lêofra hêap," *Elene*, l. 1206.

122. *Rain influence*, *i.e.*, the eyes of the ladies poured forth such "influence" as the stars were once supposed to exert upon the careers of men. "Influence," meaning literally "a flowing in" of effects (from the stars), now generally means power, authority, *e.g.*, a man of influence. *Judge.* Literally, the "eyes" seem to adjudge the prize, and this view is complimentary to the "store of ladies."

124. *Her*, *i.e.*, of the reigning favorite. "The grace of her whom," etc.

125. *Hymen*, the god of marriage, whose appearance will usher in some gorgeous wedding ceremony or masque in honor of such an occasion. L. 126 describes him as he was usually represented. See Jonson's *Masque of Hymen*.

127. *Pomp*, probably as in Latin, a solemn procession. *Cf. Paradise Lost*, vii., 564.

128. *Pageantry*, a show or spectacle with mythological or allegorical subjects. See Skeat for the history of its derivation from the "pageant," a movable platform on which the old mystery plays were performed. Compare also the "floats" in our modern processions. For a description of a masque see the Introductory Note to *Comus*.

131. *Well-trod* may refer to the number of dramas performed or to the ability of contemporary actors. See, however, *Il Pens.*, l. 101.

132. The pupil will do well to refresh himself from Brooke's *Primer of English Literature*, or some other source, with the main facts in the careers of Ben Jonson (who was living when these lines were written), and Shakspere. He should read also Milton's fine epitaph and Ben Jonson's memorial verses on Shakspere, as well as Jonson's prose tribute in his *Timber*. Milton's lines must not be understood to lend countenance to the long current theory that Shakspere was an "inspired barbarian." The Epitaph shows that Milton simply meant to oppose Shakspere's unparalleled facility and copiousness to the "slow endeavoring art" of less endowed poets. That he could ever have thought Shakspere to be without art is hardly tenable in spite of the well-known passage in *Eikonoklastes*. *Sock.* The *soccus* was a low slipper or light shoe worn by actors in ancient comedy, in distinction to the higher buskin or *cothurnus* employed in tragedy. Hence, as here, the words are used for the two species of drama. See *Il Pens.*, l. 102. The comedies of Jonson and Shakspere are proper reading for a man of L'Allegro's temperament; "learnèd" and "wood-notes wild" serve admirably to distinguish the two masters. Some editors indeed claim that "wood-notes wild" will not fit most of Shakspere's comedies. Perhaps not, but Milton was thinking rather

of Shakspere as an immortal bird of song ("*carminis alite*") than of his plays as "wood-notes;" and he certainly did not expect to be taken so literally.

135. *Eating cares*, a reminiscence of Horace (*Odes*, II., xi., 18). It is no fancy that has enabled readers to see in the liquid flow of these lines a conscious or unconscious endeavor of the poet to describe the effects of music in poetry that should be as melodious as music itself. The whole passage should be learned by heart.

136. *Lydian airs.* L'Allegro desires to be wrapped in soft strains corresponding to the third of the generally received three chief modes of ancient music, the Dorian, the Phrygian, the Lydian. The first was more majestic, the second more sprightly. Milton himself would naturally prefer the serious Dorian, which he mentions more than once. *Cf.* Dryden's "Softly sweet, in Lydian measures" (*Alexander's Feast*).

137. Wordsworth borrowed this line entire and applied it to Wisdom (*Excursion*, vii., near the middle).

138. *Meeting* means that the soul comes out to meet the verse (or airs?). *Pierce* must be pronounced to rhyme with "verse." *Cf. The Passion* ll. 22 and 24, and *Sol. Music*, ll. 2 and 4.

139. This and several following lines practically expand and explain the phrase "in soft Lydian airs." *Bout*, a turn in the music.

141. This line in which each epithet seems inapplicable to its noun (the figure, oxymoron) expresses exactly for music the concealed but perfect art which in the case of Shakspere's romantic comedies was characterized by the phrase "wood-notes wild."

142. *Mazes*, intricate passages of the music. The whole line is used absolutely.

143. *Untwisting* probably limits "voice," but this would be more clearly true if a comma were inserted after that word.

145. The story of *Orpheus* and *Eurydice*, how the mythical musician sought his wife from Hades, is practically told in the poem. The fate of Orpheus himself is told in *Lycidas*, ll. 58-63. *Cf.* also *Il Pens.*, l. 105 and *Paradise Lost*, vii., 34-37. There are few mythological incidents more frequently referred to in verse, and nowhere does the reference seem to be better made than here. Compare, however, Matthew Arnold's lines from the *Memorial Verses* on Wordsworth:

"Ah, pale ghosts rejoice!
For never has such soothing voice
Been to your shadowy world conveyed,
Since erst, at morn, some wandering shade
Heard the clear song of Orpheus come
Through Hades and the mournful gloom."

Read also the admirable description of the minstrel in Leconte de Lisle's *Khirôn* (*Poèmes Antiques*). For the use of *self* as a noun, see Morris's *Historical Outlines of English Accidence*, p. 122. *Heave*, lift, raise. Milton is fond of the word in this connection.

146. *Golden* here connotes qualities of slumber that cannot be adequately represented in prose; but this very indefiniteness adds to its poetic force.

147. The Elysian fields, the abode of the blessed after death, were conceived of by Homer as lying at the western border of the world. Later they were put in the Islands of the Blest, later still in the lower world, or Hades. It is hard to say which view Milton took when he wrote his lines, for the subsequent reference to Pluto and Eurydice, who were in Hades, need not necessarily mean that Orpheus had there his "bed of heaped Elysian flowers." *Cf. Paradise Lost*, iii., 359.

151. The concluding couplet suggests comparison with the ending of Marlowe's exquisite poem, *The Passionate Shepherd to His Love.*

IL PENSEROSO

1-10. The student will at once observe that in rhythm and stanzaic structure these verses parallel the introductory lines of *L'Allegro.* This prepares us for the parallelisms and contrasts of matter and diction that the two poems afford. A tabular analysis of these is sometimes furnished by editors, but may best be left as an original exercise for the pupil. After the first passage the logical divisions do not correspond exactly in number of lines, *Il Penseroso* containing twenty-four lines more than its companion poem. It should be noted that in banishing "Joys," the Thoughtful Man, true to his character, is far less concrete and material in his expressions than the Cheerful Man was. Compare in this connection Fletcher's beautiful song, "Hence, all you vain delights," from *The Nice Valour*, and Burton's poem before referred to.

1. Editors base the opening lines on some of Sylvester's—with probability but not with the certainty they assume.

2. The parentage of "Joys" is expressed by one line of powerful scorn, not by heaped-up opprobrium as in *L'Allegro.*

3. *Bested*, used for "bestead," which, with its involved idea of place, naturally suggests the meaning "assist." "Help" or "avail" are also synonyms that may be employed in explanation. "Bestead" is now obsolete except in its past participle. See Skeat and *Cent. Dict.*

4. *Fixèd mind, i.e.*, the mind that has fixed its thoughts on high things, not on trivial ("toys"). *Cf. Paradise Lost*, i., 97.

5. *Idle brain* (empty, hence not properly occupied), is naturally opposed "to fixèd mind" as a suitable abode for "vain deluding Joys;" it must also be set beside the "uncouth cell" of *L'Allegro*, which suggests the query raised in the comment on l. 6.

6. *Fancies fond*, foolish fancies. This may be taken as an expansion of "idle brain," making the passage read, "Dwell in some idle brain and occupy (*cf.* the biblical use of *possess*) foolish imaginations with gaudy shapes;" or the Joys may be supposed to dwell in "some idle brain," like Melancholy in her "uncouth cell," and there possess or have or occupy *themselves* with foolish fancies of gaudy shapes. The latter explanation affords a closer following of the treatment in *L'Allegro*, for it is what happens to the "Joys" themselves, and not to foolish, cheerful people, that presumably concerns the speaker of the apostrophe. The use of "shapes," however, when compared with its use in *L'Allegro* (l. 4), as well as the employment of "with," of "gay" in connection with "gaudy," and of "people" in l. 8, may, perhaps, incline the balance in favor of the former interpretation. But if, as Warton holds, Sylvester's description of the Cave of Sleep furnished Milton with much of his imagery, there is still something to be said for the more concrete interpretation. The student may make his choice, and may also look up the interesting history of the word "fond."

7. *Thick* will limit "shapes" or "fancies," according to the view taken of the meaning of l. 6. Warton aptly quotes Chaucer's "As thickke as motes in the sonnebeem."—*Wife of Bath's Tale*, l. 868.

9. *Likest*, now practically obsolete as a superlative form of "like." *Cf. Comus*, l. 237. It limits either "shapes" or "fancies," and requires "to" to be understood after it, "dreams" being thus a dative.

10. *Pensioners*, *i.e.*, those who receive pensions, therefore a class honorable or dishonorable according to the nature of the pension. Queen Elizabeth's pensioners were a tall, handsome body of gentlemen guards. Here the train of Morpheus, the god of sleep, are not regarded in a favorable light. American students may trace the history of the word at their leisure. Milton himself, it will be remembered, was a pensioner at Christ's College, *i.e.*, paid for his own "commons."

11–30. In this passage Melancholy is hailed and her parentage given. Critics have traced the influence upon Milton of Albrecht Dürer's great engraving, *Melancholia*.

14. *To hit the sense of human sight* means of course that the human eye cannot bear the glory of the "saintly visage" or countenance of "divinest Melancholy." "To hit the sense of" seems to convey the idea that in the exercise of any of our senses the object and the sub-

ject of sensation must come together in some way — *i.e.*, *hit* each other or not *miss* each other. *Cf. Comus*, l. 286, and *Antony and Cleopatra*, II., ii., 217.

15. *Weaker*, is probably nothing more than what is known as the absolute comparative, or comparative of eminence, just as *divinest* (l. 12) is a similar superlative. (See Bain, *Higher English Grammar.*) It means then "rather weak," "too weak." An implied comparison is also possibly to be discovered. *Cf.* l. 140.

18. *Prince Memnon's sister.* Himera or Hemera (*cf.* the Greek ἡμέρα, day), mentioned by Dictys Cretensis, *De Bello Trojano*, lib. vi., c. 10. No mention is made of her beauty, but she would be, the poet thinks, at least equally beautiful in common estimation ("in esteem") with her dark-skinned brother Memnon, son of Tithonus and Aurora, and king of the "blameless Ethiopians." He fought among the allies of Troy and was noted for his prowess and beauty, but fell, nevertheless, before the might of Achilles. *Odys.*, xi., 522. For the story about Memnon's statue, see *Class. Dict.*

19. *That starred Ethiop queen.* The mention of one lovely Ethiopian, whom black beseemed or suited, recalls another, *i.e.*, Cassiopea, wife of Cepheus, who offended the Nereids by boasting that her beauty, or, as some legends say, that of her daughter Andromeda, exceeded theirs. The story of the ravaging of Ethiopia by a sea monster and the rescue of Andromeda by Perseus has been a favorite subject for poets and artists. See Charles Kingsley's *Andromeda*. Both mother and daughter were after death placed among the constellations, hence Milton's epithet "starred." *Cf.*, as to the beauty of blackness, Shakspere's later sonnets, especially cxxvii.

21. *Powers* is here used to represent the sea-nymphs themselves, not their faculties. Bell compares the Latin *numina*, divinities, majesties.

23. *Vesta*, goddess of the chaste hearth, and *Saturn*, promoter of civilization, are fit parents for "divinest Melancholy," as she is conceived by Il Penseroso. The student should look up the story of Saturn and the word "Saturnine," as well as read the description in the opening of Keats's *Hyperion*. The expressions "Saturn's reign" and "no fear of Jove" will thus be easily explained. *Long of yore*, long ago.

25. *She.* Supply "was," not "being."

27. See Skeat for the history of the forms "oft" and "often."

29. *Ida* is here probably the Cretan, not the Trojan, mountain. *Cf. Paradise Lost*, i., 515.

31–60. These lines continue the invocation and describe the companions of Melancholy. The mention of the nightingale (ll. 56–60) serves as a transition to the pleasures of the evening.

32. These adjectives are plainly intended to form a contrast to the "buxom, blithe, and debonair" of *L'Allegro;* their derivations should be sought for. Exquisitely chosen as they are, there is still more beauty in the phrase "pensive Nun," fraught as it is with religious and poetical associations. *Demure*, modest, but here in an unassumed way.

33. *All* is best explained as an adverb modifying the following phrase. It may, however, be an adjective. *Darkest grain*, purple. The history of "grain" in its application to colors, as in the phrase "to dye in grain," should be traced in Skeat.

35. This line and that following may be thus paraphrased: "Come with a black hood, or veil, of very fine crape drawn over thy comely shoulders." *Sable* is used with reference to the color of that animal's fur. For *stole*, now used of an ecclesiastical vestment, see dictionary. *Cypress*, a word of unknown origin, but often confused with Cyprus, where the material was supposed to be made, was a kind of crape; *lawn* adds the idea of fine quality, being literally a sort of fine linen. *Decent* is probably a reminiscence of the Latin *decens* (*cf.* Horace, *Odes*, I., iv., 6), and is hardly to be rendered adequately in prose. "Decent because covered," as Warton explained it, smacks too much of a petty puritanism. *Cf. Nat. Ode*, l. 220.

37. *Wonted*, accustomed. See note to *Comus*, l. 332. *State*, stately bearing.

38. *Commércing*, communing, with no thought of the modern business use of the word, which as a rule now appears as a noun only. *Cf.* Tennyson's *Walking to the Mail*, cited by Verity.

42. Compare with this line the following from Milton's *On Shakspere*, "Dost make us marble with too much conceiving." The idea is common in poetry; *cf.* the legend of Niobe.

43. *Cast* is here a noun and roughly equal to "turning" of the eyes. *Leaden* seems to refer not to color, as some editors hold, but to weight or heaviness. *Sad*, *i.e.*, serious. *Cf. Comus*, l. 189, *Paradise Lost*, vi., 541.

44. *Them* refers of course to the eyes, in which the absorbed or ravished ("rapt") soul sits while Melancholy is communing with heaven. In this condition ("there"), held spellbound by the holy thoughts that influence her ("holy passion"), she is bidden by the poet to "forget herself to marble," until turning her heavy eyes downward to the earth, she fixes them there as firmly as she had formerly done on the skies. *Fix*, subjunctive after "till," which is frequent in Milton.

46. *Spare Fast.* We have here one of Milton's numerous and fine tributes to the virtue of temperate abstinence, *i.e.*, the higher side of his puritanism comes out. *Cf. Eleg.*, vi. Living with high thoughts

and reading the great poets was Milton's own way of "dieting with the gods," and hearing the

> "Muses in a ring,
> Aye [continually] round about Jove's altar sing."

The reference seems to be to the opening of Hesiod's *Theogony*, where the Muses of Helicon dance around the altar of their father Zeus. (See note to *Lycid.*, l. 15.) The same idea occurs in one of Milton's Latin prolusions (Warton). The Muses are generally associated with Apollo. *Cf.* M. Arnold's

> "'Tis Apollo comes leading
> His choir, the Nine."

50. *Trim*, see note to *L'Alleg.*, l. 75.

51. *First and chiefest.* *Cf.* our expression "first and foremost," *i.e.*, before all things, above all. The superlatives may, however, be regarded as adjectives limiting "him" or "Cherub." The line introduces a "daring use," in Professor Masson's words, of the vision in *Ezekiel*, chapter x. "The Cherub Contemplation" seems to be due to Milton's own lofty imagination playing, as Verity has shown, upon mediæval notions of the heavenly hierarchies, in which the cherubim had the special faculty of "knowledge and contemplation of divine things." Gray may have had these sublime verses in his mind when he paid his noble tribute to Milton in *The Progress of Poesy*, beginning—

> "Nor second he, that rode sublime
> Upon the seraph wings of ecstasy."

52. *Yon*, yonder. See Skeat.

55. *Hist along*, a very expressive and poetical use of an interjection as a verb in the imperative, the idea being that Silence is to be led along by means of the alluring repetition of the only sound she can naturally love to hear, a sound enjoining quiet and repose. "Hist" seems to some a participle.

56. *Less*, etc. "Unless the nightingale will grant a song." The well-known reference is to Philomela, daughter of King Pandion of Attica, who was changed into a nightingale at her own entreaty, that she might escape the lust of Tereus, her brother-in-law. *Cf.* Barnfield's "As it fell upon a Day," and Swinburne's lines in *Atalanta in Calydon*:

> "And the brown-bright nightingale amorous
> Is half-assuaged for Itylus,
> For the Thracian ships and the foreign faces,
> The tongueless vigil, and all the pain."

Curiously enough the greatest tribute to the bird by the most Greek of modern poets, the famous *Ode* of Keats, does not make use of a legend which but for its perennial beauty would deserve to be called a poetical commonplace.

57. *Plight* is taken by editors to mean either "strain" or "mood," "condition." The latter meaning seems preferable, on the whole. If "strain" be meant, the use of "in" seems to join the whole line closely to that preceding; whereas if "mood" be meant, the line is more closely joined to that following, which, to my ear, produces a much better metrical effect. The use of "with" would have settled the matter. *Cf. The Passion*, l. 14.

58. *Cf. Comus*, l. 251.

59. The moon halts above the oak frequented by the nightingale, that she may listen to the latter's song. The whole passage is highly imaginative, especially l. 58. *Dragon yoke* is rather modern than classical, Ceres having the best claim to the epithet. See note to *Comus*, l. 131. Cynthia (*cf.* Cynthius, *i.e.*, Apollo) is a name of Artemis, derived from Mt. Cynthus in Delos, where she was born. See *Class. Dict.*

60–84. This passage describes the pleasures of the evening spent in-doors and out. *L'Allegro* begins its descriptions with the early morning and the lark; *Il Penseroso* with the evening and the nightingale.

61. *Noise* can hardly mean "revels" or "music," both of which have been suggested. It seems rather to sum up the babel, the confused sounds of the light-minded bustling world, which a bird loving solitude would naturally shun.

63. *Among*. The postpositive preposition is often poetically effective.

65. *Unseen*. From the use of this word, which is deliberately negatived in *L'Allegro* (l. 57), it has been argued that *Il Penseroso* was the earlier written poem. As it undoubtedly represents Milton's temperament more nearly, it would probably find prior development and utterance; but the matter is one of little importance. Milton may, indeed, have intended his negation in *L'Allegro* to apply to the "unseen" of Burton's poem—quoted in the note to *L'Alleg.*, l. 57, although this is unlikely.

67. *Wandering moon*. The nightingale suggests the moon just as the lark the sun (*L'Alleg.*, l. 41 and l. 60). "Wandering" is derived from classical poetry. *Cf.* Horace *Sat.*, I., viii., 21, "*vaga* luna." Browne quotes appropriately Sidney's famous sonnet and Shelley's query, "Art thou pale for weariness?" Shakspere, however, has surpassed all poets, even Milton in this noble passage, by the liquid perfection of two lines in *Mid. Night's Dream*, II., i., 163–64.

"But the imperial votaress passed on,
In maiden meditation, fancy free."

A good example of an exquisite description in the simplest of terms is furnished by Horace's *Epodes*, xv., 1–2:

"Nox erat et cælo fulgebat luna sereno
Inter minora sidera."

68. This line seems to imply that the moon is "riding" nearly at the highest position it attains in the heavens, rather than that it is nearly full.

72. *Stooping*. Milton uses this expressive word in the same connection in *Comus*, l. 393.

73. *Plat*, plot, a patch of ground.

74. *Curfew* (from the French *couvre-feu*, fire-cover), the bell that sounded about eight or nine o'clock in the evening to warn inhabitants of towns and villages to put out fires and lights as a preventive against conflagrations and nocturnal disorders. The custom of ringing the curfew dates at least to the reign of the Conqueror, if not further back. It is still rung at nine o'clock in some places, though no longer required by law (*Cent. Dict.*). The first verse of Gray's *Elegy* is the best known reference to it in literature.

75. *Wide-watered shore*, *i.e.*, the shore bounding some wide water. Much conjecture has been spent over what sort of "water" Milton meant. It seems to be an inlet of the sea, across which the sound of the curfew, "Swinging slow with sullen roar," is borne to the poet on his knoll. The knoll might possibly be on the same side of the water with the bell, but the use of "roar" seems to indicate that the sound of billows mingles with that of the curfew. L. 76 would go very well with some such word as "billows," "breakers," or "tide," but as it stands there is practically nothing to do but to make it limit "curfew."

78. *Removèd*, as frequently among our older poets, is equivalent to "remote."

79. The phenomenon here described is familiar enough — the "glowing embers" make "darkness visible." (*Cf. Paradise Lost*, i., 63.) When, however, the expressions "teach light" and "counterfeit a gloom" are closely analyzed, it will be found that here, as frequently, we must content ourselves with the suggestiveness of a poet's language in lieu of any sharp definiteness of the concepts conveyed. *Through the room* modifies "counterfeit."

82. *Hearth* rhymes perfectly with "mirth."

83. This line and the following refer to the watchmen who used to

patrol streets and lanes on the lookout for evil-doers. To increase their own comfort and that of the community, but hardly their usefulness, they would sing scraps of pious poetry or popular "charms." Shakspere's Dogberry, in *Much Ado About Nothing*, is the immortal type of these functionaries, who are not without counterparts in modern America.

84. *Nightly*, nocturnal (an adjective which Milton uses; *cf. Comus*, l. 128).

85–120. This passage is devoted to the pleasures of midnight for the serious student of philosophy, tragedy, and great poetry. Compare the description of L'Allegro's reading.

86. A fine touch has been seen in this line, by Warton and others, owing to the fact that it is assumed that Milton means that some one will be outside to see the light gleaming from his turret room. If he had used "from" instead of "in," his meaning would have been plainer. As the lines stand, they may be but a poetical way of saying that he wishes to find himself at midnight in his retired study with his lamp lit and his books around him. The query arises why he emphasizes his solitude in ll. 65, 78, 81, 83, and fails to do so here.

87. *Outwatch the Bear*, keep studying till daybreak, as the "Great Bear does not set below the horizon in northern latitudes, and only vanishes on account of the daylight" (Bell).

88. *Thrice great Hermes.* Hermes Trismegistus, a mythical Egyptian philosopher or king, confounded by the Greeks with their god Hermes. The Neo-Platonists made him the source of their philosophy. His books here referred to were forgeries of the fourth century A.D. *Or unsphere*, etc. The meaning of the passage that follows seems to be that through the reading of his works "the spirit of Plato" can be unsphered, *i.e.*, brought from the unseen world back to this, and persuaded "to unfold" the secrets of the abode wherein the freed soul resides, as well as those of the world of the "demons" who preside over planets and elements. Of course, the phrase "spirit of Plato" should not be taken to mean that Milton intended to raise a ghost.

91. *Forsook*, the preterite form used for the past participle, as frequently in Elizabethan writers.

92. This line is a poetical equivalent for "body," unless "mansion" be taken, as with some editors, to mean "temporary abode" (Latin *manere*), in which case "fleshly nook" is equivalent to body.

93. *Of* is about equivalent to "with respect to." *Demons* is probably meant to suggest a fusion of the Platonic *daimona* and the mediæval demons or spirits, some of whom were planetary and some elemental. The *element* of l. 96 is not the modern chemical element, but refers to the divisions of matter recognized by the Greek philosophers and practically given in l. 94.

95. *Consent*, a feeling with, a true relation with. Angels or spirits are frequently represented as presiding over the planets.

97. *Sometime* hardly seems to differ here from "sometimes." See note to *L'Alleg.*, l. 57.

98. *Sceptred pall*, either "in royal mantle," or, as has been suggested by Professor Hales, "with sceptre and pall." Tragedy, dealing much with kings and queens, might well wear their insignia. The use of "sweeping" seems to lay a stress on "pall" that tells against the second interpretation.

99. Greek tragedies were chiefly concerned with the house of Œdipus in Thebes, with the descendants of Pelops, *i.e.*, Agamemnon and his family, and with various heroes of the Trojan war, *e.g.*, Ajax.

101. Shakspere's tragedies are of course included here.

102. *Buskined*. See note to *L'Alleg.*, 132.

104. *Musæus*, a semi or wholly mythological Greek poet. *Bower* is probably equivalent to "shaded retreat." See note to *L'Alleg.*, l. 87. *Cf.* also the reference to the "bed of heaped Elysian flowers" on which Orpheus reposed, *L'Alleg.*, ll. 146–47.

109. *Him*, etc., *i.e.*, Chaucer: The reference is to his unfinished or partly lost *Squire's Tale*, which had to do with Cambus Khan (Chaucer has "Cambinskan"), the "Tartar King," whose two sons and daughter are named by Milton. See the *Canterbury Tales*. The tale was continued by Spenser, *F. Q.*, IV., ii., iii. Editors who try to explain why Chaucer is included among the "great bards" may be answered that he is there because he *is* a great bard, and because Milton must have loved him. Further reasons are superfluous and not to be substantiated.

113. *That* refers to Canace; the husband who had her "to wife" is not specified clearly, as Chaucer speaks of Cambalo's fighting for her. Hence critics have supposed that there was a second Cambalo, not her brother, or that the scribes made a mistake. But Spenser's solution of the difficulty is a possible one, and the student should read it if only for the sake of the famous tribute which Spenser paid to Chaucer. *Virtuous*, having remarkable properties (*cf. Comus*, l. 165). In this case the ring enabled its wearer to understand the talk of birds and the healing qualities of plants. The glass was the familiar magic mirror that figures in romance and poetry. The "horse of brass" suggests the *Arabian Nights*.

116. *Great bards*. Ariosto, Tasso, Boiardo, and Spenser would certainly come under this head. Ll. 118–119 would seem to indicate that Dante, greater than any of these, was not in Milton's mind when he wrote. He appears to refer rather to what may be termed the great chivalric poets, and so Browne's surprise that Dante "finds no place in this catalogue" is unwarranted.

118. *Turneys*, tournaments. *Trophies*, the arms or banners of a vanquished foe hung up as a sign of victory. The student should trace the derivation of the word.

120. This line refers to the moral or allegorical character of the work of these poets, especially Spenser. This side of their work would naturally appeal to Milton, because of his serious nature, and because he stood nearer than we do to the Middle Ages, of which, as has been well said, allegory was "a disease." A great modern poet, Tennyson, has, in his *Idylls of the King*, composed a poem to which ll. 116–120 are very applicable, but the allegorical element does not appeal to us as it might perhaps have done to Milton and his contemporaries.

121–130. This passage describes the pleasures of a stormy morning, with which compare the more attractive description in *L'Allegro* (ll. 41–68), especially the lines about the sun (ll. 60–63).

122. *Civil-suited* is opposed by "tricked and frounced" (*i.e.*, in fine clothes and with curled hair), and contrasted to the great sun's "state" in *L'Allegro*, where the clouds wear *liveries*. Here Morning has on the plain garb of a citizen. Warton aptly cites Shakspere, *Rom. and Jul.*, III., ii., 10–11 :

> "Come, civil night,
> Thou sober-suited matron, all in black."

123. With *tricked*, *cf. Lycid.*, l. 170. *Wont*, accustomed. *Cf.* l. 37.

124. *Attic boy*, Cephalus, beloved by Aurora. See *Class. Dict.* for the story of the love trials of himself and his wife Procris.

125. *Kerchieft.* "A square piece of cloth used to cover the head; and later, for other purposes" (Skeat) was called a kerchief from the French *couvre-chef*, cover-head (*cf.* curfew). The force of the last syllable was forgotten when the compound *hand-kerchief* came into use.

126. *Piping loud*, whistling shrilly and loudly. The epithet is frequently used in connection with the wind.

127. *Still*, probably used here for "gentle" (Browne); an adverbial use is barely possible.

128. *His*, its; the possessive case of the neuter pronoun was rarely employed by Milton, although it became common by the end of the seventeenth century. See Lounsbury, pp. 165–67.

130. *Minute-drops.* *Cf.* minute-guns. Drops from the eaves following at slow and regular intervals of a minute or so.

131–150. These lines describe the pleasures of a retreat into a forest from the noonday heat, and of the sleep that there overtakes the student who has outwatched the Bear.

134. Milton uses *brown*, the Italian *bruno*, for "dark." (Keightley,

quoted by Browne.) *Cf.* Pope, *Eloisa to Abelard*, l. 170: "And breathes a browner horror on the woods." *Sylvan*, Sylvanus, the god of woods and fields in Roman mythology. For the abbreviation, see note to *Lycid.*, l. 151.

135. *Monumental* conveys the idea of a memorial of olden times as well as of massive endurance. Editors have suggested comparison with Chaucer's and Spenser's "builder oak."

136. The epithets are interchanged (chiasmus).

139. *Covert*, thicket.

140. *Profaner.* This may be the absolute comparative, but the idea seems rather to be that Milton desires to be hidden where no less sympathetic or initiated eye than his own may look.

141. *Garish*, staring, *i.e.*, the glaring sun, whose beams have been previously described as "flaring." *Cf.* the lines from Cardinal Newman's famous hymn, "Lead, kindly Light:"

> "I loved the garish day; and, spite of fears,
> Pride ruled my will: remember not past years."

Cf. also Sophocles, *Antigone*, 102: "ὦ χρυσέας ἁμέρας βλέφαρον," "O eye of golden day!" *Cf. Comus*, l. 978; *Lycid.*, l. 26; Spenser, *F. Q.*, I., iii., 4.

142. *Honeyed thigh.* The bee collects pollen on its thigh. Milton may have thought it collected honey, but it seems more likely that he did not intend to give such a literal interpretation to a very pretty and poetic epithet. See note to *Lycid.*, l. 140.

145. *Consort.* This word conveys the idea of a partner (unless Milton confused it with *concert*, as was sometimes done). The meaning of the line seems, therefore, to be that sounds consonant with the murmuring of waters and the humming of bees are to join with these in inducing sleep. *Cf. Nat. Ode*, l. 132. *They* may refer to "waters" or to "waters" and "bee."

146. *Dewy-feathered* was a favorite epithet with O. E. poets when describing birds, especially those of prey. *Cf. Judith*, l. 210:

> "Earn ǣtes georn ūrigfethera."
> "The eagle eager for food—the dewy-feathered."

Professor Cook suggests that Milton may have borrowed his epithet from this or some other O. E. poem. This is uncertain, and there is surely much poetic force in the idea that the god of sleep may be supposed to shake dew from his wings, especially as "dew of sleep" and "dew of peace" are familiar expressions. *Cf. Paradise Lost*, iv., 614.

147. The passage here introduced is so obscure that it has occasioned editors considerable trouble. Some hold that a dream waves or moves to and fro at the wings of sleep and so hovers over the sleeper "in an airy stream of vivid images portrayed upon his mental eye" (Bell). Others take "his wings" to refer to the dream, not to sleep; this compels them to reckon with a queer use of the expression "wave at." The participle "displayed," however, if taken to mean "extended wide," seems to agree very well with "wings," and if the wings are extended wide "in airy stream of lively portraiture," they should be the dream's wings. If this view be adopted, we may conceive the poet to mean that the wings of the dream are softly laid on the sleeper's eyelids, and there, extended wide, are fluttered (*i.e.*, waved at), each flutter, perhaps, causing a change in the vision presented. But "displayed" and "laid" may not limit "wings," and so the student, as in all these difficult cases, must make his own choice. It may be noted, however, that "dewy-feathered" applied to sleep does not necessarily deprive the dream of wings or of function, for sleep is evidently to shake the dew of slumber from his wings, and then the dream is to play his part. *Cf. Fairy Queen*, I., i., 44, Jonson's *Vision of Delight* (quoted by Verity) and *Paradise Lost*, viii., 292. For "wings displayed," see *Nat. Ode*, l. 114.

151–176. In these lines music awakens the sleeper, which is the reverse of the case in *L'Allegro*, and he begins to aspire to loftier heights than the more cheerful man ever dreams of. The poem closes with an acceptance of Melancholy if she will give such pleasures.

151. *Breathe*. Either an imperative with Melancholy for subject and "music" for object; or an optative with "music" for subject; or an infinitive after "let" understood. The second supposition seems to me preferable, as it sorts better with a proper understanding of ll. 153–4. See note to l. 154.

153. *Good* limits "Spirit," the second *i* in which should be slurred.

154. *Genius*. The root-meaning of this variously used word is found in the Latin, *gignere*, to beget; hence the idea of inborn nature, or the "tutelar spirit of a person." It is easy to pass, as the ancients did, to the conception of a divinity presiding over a person, place, or natural object. Then we get the idea of a guardian angel or spirit, which is what Milton means here. See the full discussion of the word in the *Century Dictionary*. *Unseen* suggests a sense of mystery which enhances the beauty of the lines describing the music breathing "above, about, or underneath"—a sense of mystery and beauty which is somewhat impaired if we conceive that the poet requests Melancholy to breathe the music for him.

155. *Due feet*. *Cf.* the familiar phrase, to be *due* at such a place or

time. The feet of Il Penseroso would naturally be expected to pace *regularly* the "studious cloister's pale."

156. *Walk* is nearly equivalent to "pace," which Milton could hardly have employed without too great use of alliteration. Let the student note the alliteration in l. 155, then substitute "pace" for "walk," and observe how Milton has avoided a specious jingle. *Cloister's* is T. Warton's admirable emendation for *cloisters*—the word signifying an *enclosure* for purposes of religious or educational seclusion. As *pale* also conveys this idea of a place shut in by pales (*cf. paling*), it is perhaps fair to assume that Milton had some concrete conception of *cloister* in his mind that involved no tautology; and as the next lines refer plainly to religious edifices, and we are also given the epithet "studious" to guide us, we can hardly refrain from believing that the poet had in mind the covered walks of Cambridge.

158. *Antique.* Milton wrote *antick,* which may have meant "ornamented." In *L'Allegro,* l. 128, he has *antique* in its modern sense. It is hard to say which meaning he intended here (Verity). See Skeat. *Massy proof, i.e.*, the pillars, being massive, are proof against the weight of the stone roof. Browne reads *massy-proof, i.e.*, proof against the mass they bear, and compares "star-proof," *Arcades,* l. 89. Bell shows that the use of an adjective in place of a noun in this and similar expressions favors the first interpretation. The matter is of slight moment, and is here dwelt on merely to show that for the finer points of criticism even the most minute philological and rhetorical investigations are not without value. *Massy* occurs again in *Lycid.*, l. 110.

159. *Storied,* used with reference to the stories (or *histories*) from the Bible represented on the stained glass of the windows. *Cf.*, Gray's "Can storied urn or animated bust" and Horace's "fabulosus —Hydaspes." (*Odes*, I., xxii., 7–8.) The lines refer to no building that can be definitely named. The phrase "dim religious light" (*i.e.*, light that prompts to religious meditation) seems, however, to suit Westminster Abbey very well.

162. *Quire* is often spelt *choir*.

163. *Clear,* clearly sung; but *cf.* note to *Lycid.*, l. 70.

164. *As* is a relative pronoun, its usual antecedent "such" being omitted. This whole magnificent passage is a convincing proof of the high and lofty character of Milton's puritanism. It further throws light upon his artistic and emotional nature, the effects of noble ecclesiastical architecture and of solemn music having never been better described than in that wonderful phrase "dissolve me into ecstasies," which those who have a mind prone to analysis may study out with the aid of an etymological dictionary. Masson notes that here alone in the poem is Il Penseroso in contact with his fellow-creat-

ures, a fact which is involved in the primary meaning of the word *religion*. Warton and Browne, like mar-alls, refer to Milton's ridicule in *Eikonoklastes* of the organ and singing men of the king's chapel. But since the days of Job it has been known that religious and political controversies are like pitch, and that not even a Milton can touch them without being defiled. They have to be touched, yet the fact need not be always remembered.

169. *Hairy gown.* The reference is scarcely to a penitential garment, but to the coarse robes worn by holy men of old. *Cf. Comus*, l. 390, in the MS., not the printed form. That Il Penseroso should finally retire from the company of his fellows, even in matters of religion, to a peaceful hermitage, is fitting enough if the character of the man be considered, for that character, though noble, is one-sided. Milton's own life closed in similar though not complete retirement. Compare with the ideal here expressed the active interest in all things pertaining to the present manifested by Mr. Gladstone in his old age.

170. *Spell,* of course, suggests the slow reading of children, and in the mouth of Il Penseroso implies thought. It seems, however, to connote study by observation rather than by reading, and taken in connection with the phrase "prophetic strain," conveys a sense of dealing with mysterious powers (*cf.* the use of the word in magic), although it must not be supposed that Milton meant more than to refer to the familiar idea that, as our bodily senses are purified, our faculties, trained as they are by "old experience," look more clearly and calmly into the future.

171. *Shew* must in reading be made to rhyme with "dew." *Cf. Comus*, ll. 994–7. Milton's fondness for botanical studies with Diodati seems to be indicated in the *Epitaphium Damonis*, l. 150, and *Comus*, l. 620 *seq.*

175. This line compared with *L'Alleg.*, l. 151, shows that Milton has less doubt as to Melancholy's ability to give her appropriate pleasures, than he has of Mirth's ability to give her lighter and more easily obtained enjoyments.

COMUS

1–92. This scene, opening in a wild wood, serves the masque as a prologue, the speech of the Attendant Spirit (a part taken by Lawes, and perhaps suggested by the Satyr of Fletcher's *Faithful Shepherdess*, itself in turn taken from the *Aminta* and *il Pastor Fido*) arousing the interest of the audience and giving them an insight into the plot. As drama such a soliloquy is not particularly effective, but as poetry one can ask for nothing better. *Cf.* the speech of the watch-

man that opens the *Agamemnon* of Aeschylus; in lighter vein, that of Love in Tasso's *Aminta*, which Milton may possibly have had in mind, although such a prologue is more distinctively Euripidean. The verse-form used is dramatic blank verse of admirable quality, redundant syllables being employed to a much greater extent than in *Paradise Lost*. Dr. Johnson and Mr. Saintsbury are right in holding that organically the blank verse of *Comus* is practically that of the later and greater poem, for this only means that Milton began by using the free "verse paragraph," and ended by using it, a statement which implies no special praise after the success of Marlowe and Shakspere in freeing blank verse from the "tyranny of the couplet form." In technical finish, however, *Paradise Lost* seems to mark a decided advance over *Comus*; there is a greater variety of harmonies, a greater surge and sweep of the rhythm. Much of this effect is doubtless due to the development of Milton's style, which is straightforward on the whole in *Comus*, complex and magnificently involved in *Paradise Lost*. Style is not exempt from the working of the laws of evolution, and indeed *Comus*, with all its nobility and beauty, was not a work capable of bearing the strain of the "grand style" at its height. But *solvitur ambulando*—let the student analyze the opening, or any other passages of the two poems, and he will probably conclude that while such lines as

"—nor of less faith
And in this office of his mountain watch
Likeliest, and nearest to the present aid
Of this occasion" (ll. 89–91)

undoubtedly foreshadow the rhythm and diction of the greater poem; such lines as

"And here their tender age might suffer peril,
But that by quick command from sovran Jove
I was despatched for their defense and guard" (ll. 40–42);

or,

"(Who knows not Circe,
The daughter of the Sun, whose charmèd cup
Whoever tasted lost his upright shape,
And downward fell into a grovelling swine?") (ll. 50–54),

beautiful as the latter passage unquestionably is, show the diction and movement of a poet who, while already great in promise, is plainly feeling for his matured style. What, by the way, is to be said of such a line as

"All other parts remaining as they were?" (l. 72).

2. *Mansion*. See note to *Il Pens.*, l. 92. *Shapes*. See note to *L'Alleg.*, l. 4; *cf. Il. Pens.*, l. 6. *Those* helps the verse metrically, and conveys the idea of "well-known." *Cf.* "that" in *Lycid.*, l. 71 (Bell).

3. *Insphered* probably signifies "each in his proper sphere," which may include a reference to the notion that angels had control of the spheres as well as to the spheres of space of the Ptolemaic system, which Milton, for poetical purposes at least, seems to adhere to. See *Cent. Dict.* *Cf. Il. Pens.*, l. 88.

4. Note the exquisite epithets in this verse, which seems reminiscential of the Homeric description of the calm abode of the gods (*Odys.*, vi., 42–45). The pronunciation "sérene" is an example of recessive accent not infrequent in *Comus* (*cf.* ll. 11, 37, 273, 421, etc.), but far less characteristic of *Paradise Lost*, as Mr. Bridges has shown. In the Cambridge MS. this line is followed by fourteen verses, which Milton, with his customary good taste, rejected, reserving, however, a pretty reference to the "Hesperian gardens" for more beautiful treatment later in the masque. *Cf.* ll. 393–95; 980–83.

5. Often quoted. *Dim* when viewed from the "starry threshold."

6. The construction is awkward. If "in which" be understood before the phrase "with low-thoughted care" (see note to *L'Alleg.*, l. 8), some confusion is wrought with the phrase "in this pinfold here." Fortunately the meaning is clear.

7. *Pestered*, clogged, cramped (Fr., *empêtrer*, to clog a horse at pasture). *Pinfold*, pound or enclosure for stray cattle. See Skeat.

10. *Mortal change*, *i.e.*, the change that comes to mortals—death. Any other interpretation seems strained, though Browne's suggestion that "change" may be used metaphorically in its old sense of a figure in a dance is worth noting.

11. A noble verse in rhythm and diction. The scriptural tone of the passage is noticeable. See *Revelation* iv.

12. *Be* is indicative, as frequently in Elizabethan English. For *due*, see note to *Il. Pens.*, l. 155.

13. *Key*. See note to *Lycid.*, l. 110.

16. *Pure ambrosial weeds*, a phrase which loses nearly all its beauty when it appears in the prosaic form of "unstained heavenly garments." Ambrosia was the food of the gods. For *weeds* see note to *L'Alleg.*, l. 120. *Mold*, in the next verse refers to this earth.

20. *By lot* refers to the well-known story of the distribution of Saturn's empire among his sons: Jupiter getting heaven; Pluto, Hades; and Neptune, the sea. The phrase *'twixt high and nether Jove*, *i.e.*, between Jupiter and Pluto, if cut off by commas, seems to limit "took." If the comma be inserted between "in" and "by," as is done by some editors, the phrase limits "lot."

21. *Sea-girt isles.* It is usual and natural to compare with this fine passage John o' Gaunt's description of England in *Rich. II.* (II., i., 40 *seq.*), which, great as it is, would not resent the insertion of such a verse as "The unadornèd bosom of the deep," where *unadorned* means "otherwise unadorned."

25. *By course,* in regular order. *Several,* separate. *Cf.* the legal term, "severalty."

29. *Quarters* may, as Bell holds, refer simply to a general division, but if the "blue-haired deities," as the same editor thinks, are distinct from the "tributary gods" (contrast ll. 27 and 31), it is best to give the word its usual meaning. The four parts would refer to the governments at London and Edinburgh and those of the Lords President of the North and of Wales (Keightley, quoted by Bell). Bell aptly cites Ovid's *caerulei dii* in defense of the epithet "blue-haired," which seems to have been regularly employed in this connection in the masques of the period.

31. *Mickle,* great. *Cf.* the Scotch use of the same word, and see Skeat.

32. *Has.* Milton does not use this form often. See note to l. 421. *Tempered awe, i.e.,* the fear inspired by the Lord President is tempered with justice and mercy. The next line is a magnificent tribute to the subjects of the Earl, viz., the Welsh. Milton's interest in the early Britons and their descendants was shown in many ways, chiefly in his proposed Arthurian epic (see *Epit. Dam.*, l. 162 *seq.*) and in his *History of Britain.* It may be noted that Milton contrives to compliment all the persons of importance present at the performance. His compliments, by the way, are in far better taste than those Tasso introduced into the *Aminta.*

34. *Where,* whither.

35. *State* may mean installation in the chair of state or may be simply some general expression of consequence and dignity. Unless the phrase "new-intrusted sceptre" be taken in a concrete sense, the latter meaning is the more probable. Editors note that the sceptre was not exactly "new-intrusted" to the Earl.

37. *Perplexed,* entangled.

38. *Horror.* Bell is wrong when he connects this word with "paths;" it plainly belongs to "brows," which as plainly belongs to "drear wood," in the sense probably of overhanging branches.

41. *But that.* Were it not for the fact that. *Sovran,* sovereign. See Skeat as to the *g* in this word.

45. *Hall or bower,* banqueting-hall or lady's bower. There is no likelihood that the poet intended to distinguish between the *chambers* of lord and lady. See note to *L'Alleg.*, l. 87.

46. Compare the genealogy invented for Comus with those given in *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso.* Bacchus and Circe are very appropri-

ate parents for the sensual divinity soon to be described. Circe herself is almost sufficiently depicted in the poem. Daughter of the sun and an ocean nymph, she married a Colchian prince, whom she murdered to obtain his kingdom, probably by means of a Colchian poison. Her father conveyed her to Aeaea, an island off the coast of Italy, where she was visited by Ulysses and his companions. By her enchantments she turned the latter into swine, but Ulysses resisted her by means of the magic herb moly, and secured his comrades' release, although he himself succumbed to her lascivious blandishments for a time. See *Odys.*, x., and the sketch of Browne's *Inner Temple Masque* in the Introductory Note.

48. *Tuscan mariners transformed.* Referring to the story in the Homeric Hymn to Bacchus and in Ovid (*Met.*, iii., 660 *seq.*) of the Etruscan or Tyrrhenian (l. 49) pirates, who, having Bacchus on board their ship, resolved to sell him as a slave; whereupon the god changed the masts and oars into snakes and the sailors into dolphins. (*Cf.* the use of the dolphin in the Arion legend; see note to *Lycid.*, l. 164.) For a delightful study of the character of Bacchus or Dionysus, see Walter Pater's *Greek Studies*. *Transformed*, a Latin use of the passive participle. Render either, "after the Tuscan mariners had been transformed," or, "after the transformation of the Tuscan mariners." *Cf.* Horace, *Odes*, I., iii., 29–30, "Post ignem aetheria domo, Subductum macies," etc.

49. *Coasting* limits "Bacchus," who is the subject of "fell" (l. 50). *Tyrrhene shore*, *i.e.*, the west central shore of Italy, washed by the Tyrrhene Sea, notorious for its pirates. *Listed*, pleased. *Cf.* the biblical use, and see Skeat.

50. *Circe's island.* See note to l. 46. For the *s* in "island" see Skeat. The rhetorical question, "Who knows not Circe?" is a familiar poetic artifice.

51. *Charmèd cup*, put by metonymy for the contained liquor, over which charms or magic verses had been sung.

52. *Whoever*, he who. There is no need of assuming that Milton here connects any moral notion with "upright."

55. *Youth*, youthfulness. *Cf.* *L'Alleg.*, l. 16. The most familiar type of the ancient representations of Bacchus is here followed.

58. *Comus*, as editors have noted, is not a well-defined figure in classical mythology—the κῶμος of the *Agamemnon* (l. 1189) mentioned by Warton, Bell, and Browne, not being even personified, so far as I can judge. The word seems to have signified a revel with music and dancing, and is perhaps derived, like "comedy," from κώμη, a village. Then we have it meaning a more or less frolicsome procession, chiefly in honor of Bacchus. In later mythology the god Comus makes his appearance with attendant festivals of a somewhat licentious character.

He was represented as a young man, crowned with flowers, and either sleeping or intoxicated. (Philostratos, *Imagines*, I., ii.) This lately developed (Philostratos the Elder wrote in the third century A.D.) and ill-defined divinity could be transported to Britain even more appropriately than the sea-nymphs in *Lycidas*. He had been previously used by Ben Jonson and Puteanus (see Introductory Note); but it is generally admitted that Milton's Comus is a creation of the poet's own. Note in this connection Milton's admirable boldness in refusing to be bound by the letter of classical mythology, *e.g.*, the story of the visit of Bacchus to Circe is his own invention. He cleaves to the spirit of antiquity, however, more than any other English poet, not even excepting Keats and Landor. So, just as Ariadne was a fit spouse for Bacchus, the divine, Circe was a fit paramour for Bacchus, the sensual; and so Comus, their son, "much like his father, but his mother more," is, in Milton's masque, a legitimate development from the somewhat commonplace god of license of the days of Philostratos.

59. *Of* is probably equivalent to "on account of." For *frolic*, *cf.* *L'Alleg.*, l. 18 and note.

60. This line refers to the god's wanderings through Gaul and Spain and gives quite an imaginative touch. *Cf.* *Paradise Lost*, i., 521.

61. *Ominous*, full of portents. *Cf.* l. 207. The *i* is slurred. *Him* is reflexive, as often in early English.

65. *Orient.* Warton notes that this word was frequently used in the sense of "*richly bright* from the radiance of the *East*," and compares *Paradise Lost*, i., 546, "with orient colors waving." Other editors follow him. I am not sure, however, that Milton did not intend a partial reference to the *eastern* drugs and poisons familiar in literature. The mother from whom Comus learned his "mighty art" was herself a Colchian. In many of the cases in which Milton uses "orient" both the meanings here given seem applicable.

66. *Drouth*, usually spelt "drought." *Phœbus* is, of course, the sun-god. The whole phrase is a poetical equivalent for "thirst," which is definitely used in the next line.

67. *Fond*, foolish. See *Il Pens.*, l. 6, and Skeat.

69. This line expresses a familiar idea in our poetry, derived naturally from the well-known verse in *Genesis* i. *Cf.* Shakspere's noble words in *Hamlet*, II., ii., 318, and Milton's "human face divine," *Paradise Lost*, iii., 44.

71. *Ounce*, an animal closely related to the leopard, but distinct, inhabiting the mountains of Asia at a high altitude.

72. This most prosaic line, while departing from Homer's account of the effects of Circe's enchantments, has one merit which editors have pointed out: it fits the stage directions to follow, which were

naturally made simple to suit the private character of the performance.

74. Commentators note that this line also fails to follow Homer's account; and that the next line but one gives to the cup of Comus the effect ascribed by Homer (not by Tennyson) to the lotus (*Odys.*, ix., 94 *seq.*). I cannot help feeling that Milton, when he wrote these verses, was thinking more of the college debaucheries he had witnessed, but abstained from, than he was of Homer or Comus. There is a peculiar force of direct scorn in the line "To roll with pleasure in a sensual sty," that seems to lend color to this view. We have Shakspere's authority in *Othello* for the drinking propensities of the Englishmen of the period, and we may be sure that although Cambridge was a nurse of puritanism, Milton saw enough drunkenness there to work him up to this magnificent denunciation.

79. *Adventurous*, now generally applied to persons of a rash disposition; here it means "full of dangers."

80. Editors have not failed to notice how the rhythm and alliteration of this verse suit the sense it bears. *Cf. Paradise Lost*, i., 744–46; iv., 556.

81. *Convoy*, guidance. *Cf. convey.*

83. *Iris' woof*, *i.e.*, spun from threads of Iris's weaving (trace derivation and meaning of "woof"); or, more probably, spun from threads colored like the rainbow, Iris being the goddess that impersonated this natural phenomenon. *Cf. Paradise Lost*, xi., 244.

85. Editors are in all likelihood right in seeing in this and the following lines a compliment to Lawes and the Earl of Bridgewater.

86. *Soft pipe* is a favorite expression when the music of shepherds is referred to. *Smooth-dittied* is a pretty example of Milton's use of the compound epithet. "Ditty" means strictly the words of a song (so here), but is often confused with "song" itself. *Cf. Lycid.*, l. 32. The tribute to Lawes's musical skill is reminiscential of the stories told of Orpheus. *Cf.* ll. 494–500.

87. *Knows to.* We say in prose "knows how to." *Cf. Lycid.*, ll. 10–11. Note the superabundance of alliteration in this passage.

88. *Less* brings the faithfulness of Thyrsis into comparison with his musical skill.

90. *Likeliest*, *i.e.*, Thyrsis, being a shepherd and keeping watch on the mountains, is naturally most likely to be near the scene of danger, and therefore can be impersonated by the Spirit with least risk of discovery.

92. *Viewless*, invisible—Shaksperian and Miltonic.

Stage Directions. These seem to be partly due to Lawes, who had more experience in such matters than Milton.

Charming-rod. Note the importance of the rod in magic art. *Cf.*

Circe's use of the wand, the rods of the Egyptian sorcerers with whom Moses contended, etc. *Cf.* also the rod or switch used by the modern well-finder, and the invariable wand of the latter-day conjurer or "Professor of the Art of Prestidigitation."

Rout, a disorderly company, or rabble.

Glistering, glistening. *Cf.* Shakspere's "All that glisters is not gold," in the *M. of V.* (II., vii., 65), *cf.* l. 219. A very similar and curious "rout" is described in the anti-masque of Browne's *Inner Temple Masque*. See Introductory Note.

93-144. This is a lyrical passage of great beauty, composed mainly in the octosyllabic measure of *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* (see note to *L'Alleg.*, 11-24). A few pentameters lend a certain stateliness of movement where it seemed needed. It will be noted that, as soon as Comus hears the sound of footsteps, *i.e.*, as soon as the main dramatic business of the masque begins, he drops the lyrical measure, and begins to use blank verse, the staple metrical form of the poem. It will be observed also that the matter of the passage under discussion is lyrical, *i.e.*, it consists of picturesque description and invocation leading up to the dance or measure indicated by the stage directions. In other words this lyric serves many of the functions of a chorus in a Greek tragedy. Similar lyrical passages or interludes are to be found in the pastoral dramas and masques that were the forerunners of *Comus*, *e.g.*, in the *Aminta*, *The Faithful Shepherdess*, Jonson's masques, etc. They occur also in such a drama as *Midsummer Night's Dream*. Strictly speaking, the passage forms an anti-masque.

93. Refers to Hesperus, the evening star, that warns the shepherd that it is time to fold his flocks. Shakspere's "unfolding star" (*M. for M.*, IV., ii., 218) for the morning star is frequently cited in this connection.

94. Refers to the high position of the star above the horizon.

96. *His glowing axle doth allay*, *i.e.*, quenches the heat of *its* (see note to *Il Pens.*, l. 128) axle in the steep (high; *cf.* l. 375) Atlantic Ocean which the ancients regarded as a "stream" of great magnitude, flowing around the earth. The lines probably refer to the opinion prevalent in classic times that the setting of the sun in the Atlantic was accompanied by a hissing of the waters. As to "stream," Milton might possibly have been influenced by the O. E. poets, *cf.* *lagustrēam* (*Andreas*, l. 423). *Cf.* also *hēanne holm* (*Elene*, l. 983).

98. The sun, sloped or sunk beneath the horizon, shoots his beams upward toward the northern (as Milton first wrote it) pole shrouded in dusk, and paces toward his eastern goal, now that he has reached his western one. It is natural to compare the noble passage in *Psalm* xix. 5: "The sun as a bridegroom cometh out of his *chamber*, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race." It is equally natural to com-

pare the remainder of the lyric with its invocations to "joy and feast, midnight shout and revelry, tipsy dance and jollity," and its exquisite descriptions of moonlit seas and glades, with the passage in *L'Allegro* (ll. 25–40) that invites Mirth and her joyous companions to "come and trip it on the light fantastic toe." The moral content of the two passages must, however, be contrasted; and the student may perhaps note that the poet's style is less spontaneous, his art more conscious, as befits a later work.

105. *Twine*, with an entwining or twisting-in of roses. *Cf. Nat. Ode*, l. 226, and, in a slightly different sense, Lodge's *Rosaline*,

> "Of selfsame color is her hair
> Whether unfolded, or in *twines*."

107. *Rigor*. Note the frequent personifications. Gray went several steps further in this direction than his master, and the effect is not always pleasant. *Scrupulous* is a proper epithet from Comus's point of view.

110. *Saws*, popular sayings or maxims. *Cf.* Shakspere: "Full of wise *saws* and modern instances." *As You Like It*, II., vii., 156.

111. *Of purer fire* refers to the idea of the ancients that fire was the element of which the gods consisted.

112. *Starry quire*, the spheres that make music according to the doctrine of Pythagoras, or the spirits that inhabit and guide them. *Cf.* Shakspere's famous lines in *M. of V.*, V., i , 54–65, especially

> "Still *quiring* to the young-eyed cherubins."

Cf. also Goethe's fine lines in the dedication to *Faust:*

> "Die Sonne tönt nach alter Weise
> In Brudersphären Wettgesang."

113. This line and the next make it not unlikely that it is the spirits inhabiting the spheres that constitute the "starry quire." Note the stately rhythm of this couplet, obtained chiefly through the long syllables employed. *Nightly*. *Cf. Il Pens.*, l. 84. It is hard to say whether Milton meant the word to be an adjective or an adverb.

115. *Sounds*, a word that should be familiar to students of American geography. *Cf. Paradise Lost*, vii., 399. *Finny drove*. *Cf.* Horace, *Odes*, *I.*, ii., 7-9.

> "Omne cum Proteus *pecus* egit altos
> Visere montes,
> Piscium et summa genus haesit ulmo."

116. *Morrice*, a Moorish dance brought from Spain into England by John o' Gaunt, and frequently referred to in literature.

117. *Tawny* is a beautiful adjective, but as it means "yellowish brown," "sun-burned," it seems hardly appropriate for sands at midnight. Milton first wrote "yellow." Mr. Verity thinks he substituted "tawny" to avoid comparison with Shakspere (*cf.* Ariel's song *Temp.*, I., ii., 376, "Come unto these yellow sands"). The same editor notes here and elsewhere Keats's evident following of Milton in *Endymion* and his other early works. *Shelves*, rocky ledges.

118. *Pert*, brisk (not "forward" in an improper sense). *Dapper* may be "quick" or "valiant" in accordance with its derivation, but "spruce" seems better here.

119. Note the exquisite choice of epithets in *dimpled* and *trim* (l. 120). *Cf. L'Alleg.*, l. 75.

121. *Wakes*, night-watches: originally the vigil kept at the completion of a parish church, then a nightly merry-making. *Cf.* its use in connection with the dead, in which the same degeneration into a carousal may be observed. See *Cent. Dict.*, under "wake" and "likewake."

125. *Rights*, rites. *Cf.* l. 535. This spelling of "rites" is not unprecedented, but it is possible that Milton literally meant *rights*, as Comus is defending the propriety of his revels.

129. *Cotytto*, a Thracian goddess of wantonness and debauchery, whose festivals were naturally celebrated at night. The "to" in "to whom" should be slurred.

131. *Dragon womb.* Editors see in this expression an allusion to the not unfamiliar idea that the chariot of night was harnessed with dragons, as the moon's in *Il Pens.*, l. 59. (See note.) It seems, however, that Milton either means to call "darkness" itself a dragon, *i.e.*, a monstrous being, or, better, that he means that the womb of darkness breeds monsters.

132. *Stygian.* See note to *L'Alleg.*, l. 3. *Spets*, spits.

133. *One.* This use of "one," which makes it equivalent to "universal," "entire," is not unfamiliar, *e.g.*, "he is one mass of conceit."

135. *Hecat'*, Hecate, a Thracian goddess of witchcraft, often confused with Proserpine. She appears in *Macbeth*. *Cf.* l. 535.

139. *Nice*, here over-fastidious, too prone to blush at Comus and his crew. *Indian*, because "eastern." Editors trace out to their own satisfaction Milton's indebtedness to various poets for this and that epithet in this beautiful passage—a pleasant but hardly useful or convincing process.

140. *Cabined*, narrow. *Cf.* Shakspere's "Cabin'd, cribb'd, confined," *Macbeth*, III., iv., 24, and M. Arnold's "Her cabin'd, ample spirit." (*Requiescat.*) Warton's proposed reading, *cabin's*, has not met with

favor. He defends it by observing that Comus is describing the morning contemptuously; his change would, however, destroy much of the euphony of the verse.

141. *Descry*, reveal or describe.

142. *Solemnity*, *i.e.*, the "rights" of l. 125, and the "dues" of l. 137.

143. *Beat the ground.* *Cf.* Horace, *Odes*, I., xxxvii., 2, "pulsanda tellus."

144. *Fantastic.* See note to *L'Alleg.*, l. 34. *Cf.* Collins, *The Passions*, l. 90. *Round*, a country-dance in which the participants join hands. *Measure* is generally, but not here, used of a dignified dance.

145–169. Comus hears the footsteps of the Lady and bids his comrades retire. He himself in a short soliloquy recounts his nefarious intentions, and then steps aside.

147. *Shrouds*, now chiefly used to mean a garment for the dead (see Skeat); here covers, or hiding-places among the trees and underbrush ("brakes").

148. Supply "it is" after "sure."

151. *Trains*, enticements, snares, plots.

153. *Hurl.* This word, as Masson suggests, seems to imply that the actor threw some powder (see l. 165) into the air, which was kindled so as to produce a flash of light. Milton's MS. shows that "powdered" was used originally in place of "dazzling."

154. *Spells* is here used more concretely than is generally the case. It does not mean merely a formula of magic words, but refers to the whole performance of hurling the powder, etc. Note the force of "spongy," and observe that "spells" is limited by "of power."

155. *Blear*, deceptive, through *blurring*. See Skeat.

156. *Presentments*, shows, appearances, *i.e.*, that which is presented to the eye. Distinguish from *presentiment*.

157. *Quaint habits*, queer clothes. *Quaint* (Lat., *cognitus*), known, remarkable, hence, curious. It was confused with *comptus*, adorned, neat, and sometimes has this meaning in our older authors. See Skeat. *Cf.* *riding-habit.*

161. *Glozing*, flattering, deceiving.

163. *Wind me*, insinuate myself into the confidence of, etc. See Skeat.

165. *Virtue.* See note to *Il Pens.*, l. 113.

167. *Whom thrift*, etc., "whom industry keeps awake at this time of the night to attend to his rural business." *Gear* involves the idea of preparation, hence its usual meaning of harness or tackle. Note that both the good and the evil Spirit adopt nearly the same expedient to gain their ends. This passage was slightly altered in the edition of 1673, but editors rightly prefer the earlier texts.

168. *Fairly*, softly. Warton notes that the two words sometimes went together to signify "gently."

170–229. The Lady enters and, believing herself alone, describes in exquisite poetry the effect upon her of the sounds of revelry she has heard, how she has lost her Brothers, how the dangers of the wood oppress her, but how she trusts the powers of good to protect innocence. A silver lining in a cloud cheers her drooping spirits, and she resolves to wake the echoes with a song.

170. *Mine*, as Bell notes, is not emphatic. It was frequently used before vowels. See Lounsbury, p. 277. *Cf.* my, immediately below.

171. *Methought*, it seemed to me. "Me" is a dative; the impersonal "thought" is not from our modern verb "think," but from O. E. *thyncan*, to appear. See Skeat, under "Methinks."

173. *Jocund.* See note to *L'Alleg.*, l. 94. *Gamesome*, lively, prompting to games and merriment.

174. *Loose*, *i.e.*, in morals, probably. *Hinds*, rustics. See Skeat, and *cf.* "villain," "peasant."

175. *Granges*, barns. See *Cent. Dict.* Now used of a farmhouse. *Cf.* the *Granger* party in this country. The "moated grange" of Shakspere and Tennyson was a lonely, isolated mansion.

176. *Pan*, the god of shepherds and, as his name implied, of everything connected with rural matters, *i.e.*, with nature. He was chiefly worshipped in Arcadia, and was the hero of various legends, one of which has been utilized by Mrs. Browning in one of her best-known poems. See *Class. Dict.*

178. *Swilled insolence of such late wassailers*, the drunken insolence of such late carousers. *Swilled*, participle of *swill*, to drink greedily, is a transferred epithet. *Wassailers* is derived from *wassail*, which in turn represents the Northumbrian *wæs hæl*, be hale or of sound health, which was a phrase used at a drinking-bout. See Skeat. *Cf.* *Paradise Lost*, i., 501–2:

"— then wander forth the sons
Of Belial, flown with insolence and wine."

180. *Inform*, direct. See *Samson Agonistes*, l. 335: so Verity, Bell, and *Cent. Dict.* In the present instance the use of *where* for *whither* suggests a suspicion whether the word does not rather mean "get information for;" *i.e.*, such revellers are probably the only persons that can set her feet upon the right path.

181. *Blind*, obscure. Verity compares our modern "*blind*-alley."

184. *Spreading*, a transferred epithet.

189. *Like a sad votarist.* A *votarist* is one who has taken a vow. *Sad*, sober, serious. *Cf. Il Pens.*, l. 43. A *palmer* was, according to a common derivation, a pilgrim who brought back palms as a proof of

having been to Palestine. For *weed*, see note to *L'Alleg.*, l. 120. In connection with these exquisite lines Masson remarks: "If this fine image is optically realized, what we see is Evening succeeding Day as the figure of a venerable grey-hooded mendicant might slowly follow the wheels of some rich man's chariot." I fail to see the necessity for lugging in the mendicant and the rich man. If we must have a concrete realization of the image, we shall probably do better to recall the thoughtful, truly pious pilgrims who followed in the wake of the noble warriors that won the Holy Sepulchre from the infidels. Whether Milton intended his lines to bear any very definite interpretation is more than doubtful. The Lady remembers that her Brothers left her as Evening drew on, and in her present sorrow she describes that event by means of an image suggesting pensive care following in the wake of lively joys. If she had been describing *Night* she would probably have used a stronger image; but for Evening, when she had just been left, the image she does use is very suggestive. It is certainly far more poetic than the elaborate conceit that follows (ll. 195–200), in which Nature appears as a lamp-filler, and Night as a burglar with a dark lantern. It is not always the image that can be best realized optically that is the most poetic. *Cf.* Warton's note on the passage. Ll. 195–225 were omitted in the *Bridgewater MS.*, probably to lighten the part of the young lady, not from motives of delicacy, as has been suggested.

190. *Wain*, wagon.

192. *Likeliest*, most likely. See note to *Il Pens.*, l. 15. Warton notes Milton's fondness for this particular superlative. *Cf.* l. 90.

193. *Engaged.* Bell renders "committed," which is hardly satisfactory, although it is difficult to find a better word.

198. There is a change in construction here. We should naturally expect "filled" to be the verb of a dependent clause, not of a main one; if the new object, "their lamps," had not been introduced, there would have been no change necessitated. But that object was needed to carry out the figure to its undesirable completion. The stars have often been likened to candles, but this figure does not require the explicitness of detail that renders Milton's lines almost amusing. The O. E. poets sometimes called the sun "heaven's candle." The youthful Milton, it may be remarked, could hardly be expected to be entirely free from the faults of the Fantastic School of Poets (represented by Donne, Crashaw, Cartwright, and Cowley). *Cf.* the queer conceit in the seventh stanza of his unfinished poem, *The Passion*,

> "Mine eye hath found the sad sepulchral rock
> . . . .
> Yet on the softened quarry would I score
> My plaining verse as lively as before."

203. *Rife* signifies abundance, prevalence. Here it is about equivalent to "abundantly manifest." *Perfect*, completely plain or distinct.

204. *Single darknes* is by some editors explained to mean "darkness only," but this, to my mind, takes away much force from the epithet. It seems rather to mean "unmixed," "uncompounded with any other element." Verity's paraphrase, "complete," agrees with this. *Cf.* l. 369, note.

205. The short passage beginning here is justly famous for its weird, almost sublime, beauty. Editors and critics have supposed the lines to be founded on passages in Marco Polo, Heywood's *Hierarchy of Angels*, and more than one play of Shakspere's, especially his *Tempest*. Such matters can rarely be settled definitely; but few readers will be rash enough to deny that the passage derives its entire present value from Milton's noble use of his own poetic imagination. The similar lines from *The Faithful Shepherdess* at the close of Act I., Scene i., may be compared, and the wonderful difference in Milton's favor noted. See note to l. 432.

208. *Syllable*, pronounce distinctly.

210. *Well* would ordinarily precede "startle," as it is a modal adverb nearly equivalent to "indeed."

212. *Strong siding*, *i.e.*, a champion that takes sides strongly, or warmly espouses the cause of.

214. *Girt* means enclosed, girdled. The poet may mean that Hope, while hovering, droops her wings so that they encompass her form; or he may simply use the word as nearly equivalent to "clad." *Cf.* for the whole passage Horace, *Odes*, I., xxiv., 6–7.

215. Editors note the significant insertion of *Chastity* in place of the Charity of the well-known Pauline trio of virtues, Chastity being practically the key-note of *Comus*. *Cf.* ll. 418–75, 780–99.

216. *Ye* is here in the objective case, a frequent confusion among the Elizabethans. *Cf.* l. 967. See Lounsbury, pp. 271–2. *Visibly*, *i.e.*, in visible or bodily forms.

217. Scan: "That Hé the Súpreme Goód to whom áll things ill," slurring "to whom;" otherwise the ictus falls on "to," which is undesirable.

219. *Glistering*. See note to *Stage Directions*.

221. Here the Lady suddenly breaks off, noting, as she does, a glimpse of light in the dark sky above her. The passage is noted for its beauty, which is enhanced by the repetition, or rather parallelism, of ll. 223–4. See on this last point Professor C. A. Smith's valuable study, *Repetition and Parallelism in English Verse*. *Cf.*, for a use of this poetical device, *Lycidas*, ll. 62–63, and the well-known lines of *Paradise Lost* (vii., 25–26):

"though fallen on evil days,
On evil days though fallen, and evil tongues."

225. *Casts* breaks the construction, as it is logically co-ordinate with "turn," which is an infinitive. *Tufted.* See note to *L'Alleg.*, l. 78.

226. Note the weak ending of this line. The next two verses have redundant syllables, so that the passage is blank verse of a characteristically dramatic type. If "make to be heard" be equivalent to "cause to be heard," verse 227, if read normally, seems, to my ear, to receive only four stresses, *e g.*, "Such noíse as I can, máke to be heárd fárthest." This leads me to think that the line might be improved by cutting off "to be heard farthest" with commas, thus giving a more normal cæsura and a more pronounced pause. The phrase would then be an infinitive of purpose. I have not ventured to make this change in the text because it is rash to challenge comparison with Milton's exquisite sense of harmony. Note that the Lady cannot "hallo" to her Brothers because that might attract attention and perhaps danger to them. She will risk the possible danger to herself.

230-243. These lines comprise an exquisite song, worthy to rank with any that Mr. Bullen has collected in his delightful anthology from the Elizabethan dramatists. It is not as spontaneous as some of Shakspere's, nor has it the pathetic inevitableness of Fletcher's "Lay a garland on my hearse," but it is in every way worthy of Milton's genius, which was, however, hardly that of a song-writer proper, but rather delighted in what may be called the lyric of elaboration. Note in this connection the complex arrangement and imperfect character of the rhymes, the similarity of sounds, and the varying number of feet. The appeal to Echo may or may not have been suggested by Peele (*Old Wives' Tale*, ll. 417-24), or Ben Jonson (*Cynthia's Revels*, I., i.). It was a familiar device in the masques of the period, owing seemingly to the effectiveness which the reply of Echo would give and the chance afforded the musician to display his art. *Cf.*, abstract of *Inner Temple Masque* given in the Introductory Note. The most curious use of the device that I have found is in *il Pastor* Fido, IV., viii., which Browne imitated in *Britannia's Pastorals*, I., v.

230. *Echo* the nymph, daughter of Earth and Air, blabbed of Jupiter's amours, and was appropriately punished by Juno, who deprived her of speech except in answer to questions, her answers being discreetly fitted to the questions. Echo then fell in love with the beautiful Narcissus, and, meeting the same fate she had served out to Pan, pined away till nothing was left of her save her beautiful but useless voice. Narcissus (l. 237) survived to fall in love with his own image in a fountain, pine away or drown himself, and be changed to the flower that bears his name.

231. *Airy shell*, atmosphere or vault of heaven. The metaphor is plain, "shell" not being used in its sense of musical instrument, as some have thought. The *MS.* variant is *cell*. *Cf. Nat. Ode*, ll. 99–103.

232. *Meander* is the winding river in Asia Minor from which we have derived our familiar verb. Editors have sought to explain the reference to this particular river by its "associations with music and misfortune" (*cf.* the Marsyas legend), its numerous flocks of swans, favorite birds with ancient poets, etc. So, some see in the "violet-embroidered vale" the Attic Colonus, a haunt of nightingales. The matter cannot be settled, but I should say that Keightley's guess that the windings of the river suggested its being a fit home for Echo, is as near the mark as any. *Cf.* Gray, *Progress of Poesy*, ll.69–72. *Margent*, margin. The phrase reappears in l. 23 of Gray's *Eton College Ode*.

233. The arguments in favor of Colonus are quite strong, *e.g.*, "violet-crowned" is an epithet often applied to Athens; Milton in the famous passage on Athens (*Paradise Regained*, iv., 236 *seq.*) speaks of the Attic bird trilling "her thick-warbl'd notes," etc.

234. *Love-lorn* may, as Bell holds, mean that the nightingale has been deprived of her loved ones, and so may refer to the story of Aëdon, who, killing her own son by mistake, was changed into a nightingale. But the word may mean simply "sad through love," and refer to the better known story of Philomela (see note to *Il Pens.*, l. 56). *Cf.* Sir Philip Sidney's beautiful song, "The nightingale, as soon as April bringeth," especially the lines:

> "Alas, she hath no other cause of anguish
> But Tereus' love, on her by strong hand wroken."

241. The exquisite appropriateness of the phrase "Sweet Queen of Parley" will be apparent. *Parley* is conversation, often between two parties anxious to find out what each other may be thinking of, which is notoriously the case when one parleys with Echo. *Daughter of the Sphere* has been taken to refer to the "airy shell" or atmosphere of l. 231, or to the music of the spheres whose reverberation gives the nymph her origin. Whether the latter explanation is thoroughly poetical, as it is given, may be doubted, but the opening lines of Milton's *At a Solemn Music:*

> "Blest pair of Sirens, pledges of Heav'n's joy,
> Sphere-born harmonious sisters, Voice and Verse,"

seem to indicate that there is a germ of truth in it. The same lines have also been cited to support the former explanation. "Sphere" seems intended to rhyme with "are."

243. "Add the charm of echo to the music of the spheres" (Bell). The verse is an Alexandrine.

244–330. Comus in the guise of a shepherd steps from his retreat (probably not coming fully on the stage till l. 265), and apostrophizes in eloquent poetry the beauty of the Lady. He resolves to make her his queen and accosts her. She repels his advances with dignified courtesy, a brisk explanatory dialogue ensues, and after he has assured her of his willingness and ability to guide and protect her, she consents to follow him, committing herself to the guardianship of Providence. Verses 277–290 are noticeable as a distinct imitation of the *stichomythia* of Greek tragedy, question and answer occupying alternate lines. This lends a dramatic force to the scene which for the rest is decidedly lacking, although there is plainly no lack of noble and sustained poetry.

244. An exquisite rendering of the idea conveyed by the familiar phrase "human clay." The personal compliment intended for the Lady and the composer is obvious.

247. *Vocal*, *i.e.*, the air seems to be given a voice by the song.

248. *His*, as often, stands for "its," which refers to "something holy." Note that Comus is not repelled or abashed by this holiness, so contrary to his own nature, but is rather incited to undertake its conquest.

250. *Empty-vaulted*, probably used because the night was void of stars. *Cf.*, in an opposite sense, M. Arnold's *Self-Dependence:*

"Through the intense, clear, *star-sown vault* of heaven."

251. *Fall.* Supply "of the voice." *Smoothing*, etc. Compare this exquisite figure with *Il Pens.*, l. 58. *Cf.* also *Paradise Lost*, i., 21. *It* refers to "darkness," which is evidently to be conceived as a great, dusky bird, covering the earth with its wings. Verity seems to think that "it" must refer to "down," which is unnecessary.

253. *Sirens three.* The Sirens were supposed to dwell on a rocky island near Sicily and to lure sailors to destruction by their sweet singing. They were variously described and named. (See *Class. Dict.*) Ulysses passed them by, but only because he stopped the ears of his crew with wax, and had himself tied to the mast, with orders that no heed should be paid to his commands or entreaties to halt. The angry Sirens threw themselves into the sea (*Odys.*, xii., 166 *seq.*). Various other legends are told of them, but they seem to be unconnected with Circe (who, indeed, warned Ulysses against them), save through the medium of their common power of destructive enchantment, which probably caused Milton to bring them together here, as Browne had previously done in his *Inner Temple Masque*. *Cf.* however, Horace, *Epist.*, I., ii , 23. Homer makes mention of only two

Sirens. Dante has a vision of only one, who is described in exquisite lines, worthy of Homer himself (*Purg.*, xix., 19–24). *Cf.* the Lorelei legend and the stories of kelpies as illustrated in Heine's well-known poem, and in Dr. R. Garnett's *The Kelpie and the Wrecker*. See note to l. 868.

254. *Flowery-kirtled*, *i.e.*, with skirts adorned with flowers, or like flowers. *Naiades*, fresh-water nymphs presiding over rivers, springs, and fountains. The singing of Circe's maidens is not stressed in Homer or Ovid, but is in Browne. (Warton.) Their gathering of herbs is classical.

256. *Sung*, the participial form used for the preterite, as frequently. *Take the prisoned soul.* Bell is doubtless right in considering this a proleptic use of the participle, equivalent to "take the soul prisoner," as it is the souls of listeners that are referred to and not of those subdued by magic arts.

257. *Elysium.* See note to *L'Alleg.*, l. 147. *Cf.* also *L'Alleg.*, l. 136 and note. *Scylla* was the famous rock, and *Charybdis* (l. 259) the whirlpool so fatal to sailors as to have become proverbial. Scylla had been a rival of Circe's for Glaucus the sea god, and had been turned by enchantment into a monster, whereupon she leaped into the sea and became a dangerous rock. See *Class. Dict.* Warton notes that in the *Bellum Punicum* of Silius Italicus there is another instance of these fabulous monsters being charmed by music.

262. *Home-felt.* *Cf.* "to strike home."

263. An exquisite verse, which is often quoted.

265. Editors naturally compare with *Tempest*, I., ii., 421–8.

267. *Unless*, etc. Supply "thou be" or "they bred thee as."

268. *Dwell'st*, dwells, in modern and normal English. *Pan.* See note to l. 176. *Sylvan.* See note to *Il Pens.*, l. 134.

271. *Gentle shepherd*, a familiar collocation. Allan Ramsay used it as a title for his well-known drama. *Ill is lost* seems to be a Latinism, from *male perditur* (Keightley, quoted by Bell). The Lady is not displeased at the compliment to her Brothers. *Cf.* l. 291 *seq.*

273. *Shift*, *i.e.*, it was her last resource or contrivance.

279. *Near-ushering*, *i.e.*, waiting in close attendance, as ushers at doors.

284. *Twain.* See note to *Lycid.*, l. 110.

285. In this line *forestalling* seems to tell against taking *prevented* in its old sense of "anticipated" rather than in its modern sense of "hindered."

286. *Hit*, guess. See note to *Il Pens.*, l. 14.

287. This concise construction adds much to the effect of the imitation of the Greek style. The question is equivalent to, "Apart from your present needs (or emergency) does their loss mean much to you?"

290. *Hebe's*. See note to *L'Alleg.*, l 29.

291. *What time*, when. *Labored* is used of a style of writing when it shows signs of the care and work bestowed upon it; so the epithet may here be used of "oxen," because by their relaxed condition they show the effects of their work upon themselves.

293. *Swinked*, tired with toil. See Skeat. *Hedger*, one who repairs hedges, a common agricultural laborer.

294. *Mantling*, spreading. We speak of blushes *mantling* the cheek and of a *mantled* pool, *i.e.*, one that is covered with scum.

297. *Port*, frequently used for "mien," "bearing," "deportment." The intended compliment to the Brothers is obvious.

299. *Element*, air. See note to *Il Pens.*, l. 93.

301. *Plighted*, folded, interwoven, plaited (see Skeat). *Cf.* the Italian *piegati rami*, plighted boughs (Tasso, *Aminta*, I., ii., 66). *Awe-strook*, an obsolete form of "awe-struck."

303. An exquisite simile. It may be remembered that the Devil has been known to quote Scripture for his own purposes. Comus must refer rather to the pleasure of seeking heaven than to the proverbial difficulty of the task.

312. *Dingle*, a narrow valley between steep hills. *Dell*, dale, a valley with gentler slope. *Bosky bourn* (l. 313), bushy valley with a brooklet running through it.

315. *Stray attendance*, strayed attendants. *Cf. Paradise Lost*, xii., 132, where "servitude" is used in a concrete sense.

316. *Shroud*. See note to l. 147.

317. *Low-roosted*. Milton surely has no intention of conveying any idea of the lark's *perching*. He means, as Masson holds, simply *resting* on the ground.

318. *Thatched pallet*, a conceit for "nest;" it is not specially poetical. *Rouse* is used intransitively.

321. *Till further quest*, *i.e.*, till further search is made for you, or we can make further search for them (the Brothers).

322. *Courtesy* is derived from *court*. The passage shows how the retired Milton was looking askance at the court already plunging into the vortex that was to destroy it. See Spenser, *F. Q.*, VI., i., 1.

327. *Less warranted*, *i.e.*, that gives less guarantee of safety. *Cf.* the legal use of the term, *i.e.*, to *warrant* a title.

328. *That I should fear to change it*. The meaning is that as no place could be more insecure, as a result, she need have no fear to change it for another.

329. *Square*, fit or adjust her trial to her strength after the latter has been proportioned (proleptic participle).

331–489. This scene is occupied by a highly poetical interchange of thoughts between the two Brothers of the Lady on the strength of

Chastity against the assaults of evil. Here, as elsewhere, the power of the true dramatist to create characters that live and move and have their being outside of himself is singularly lacking; but nowhere does Milton show himself a purer man or a truer poet.

331. *Unmuffle.* The omission of the reflexive "yourselves" practically puts the verb in the middle voice.

332. *Wont'st*, art accustomed, formed from *wont* (woned) the participle of the M. E. verb *wonen*, to dwell or be accustomed. So *wonted*, *Il Pens.*, l. 37. See Skeat. *Benison*, blessing.

333. *Stoop.* *Cf.* *Il Pens.*, l. 72. *Amber.* See note to *L'Alleg.*, l. 61.

336. *Your*, *i.e.*, of the stars and moon. *Influence.* See note to *L'Alleg.*, l. 122.

337. *Taper*, must be a vocative here on account of the use of *thy* in l. 340, but it is a rather confusing construction, since it occurs in an apostrophe to other objects. Milton seems to have written "a" first and then changed to "thy."

338. *Wicker-hole*, *i.e.*, the window of a poor cottage plastered with clay. The shutter of the window was perhaps composed of wicker work.

340. *Rule*, ruler, or instrument for drawing straight lines; *levelled* gives the idea that the "rule" is held horizontally; and the whole expression is a metaphorical way of describing the long horizontal beam of light emitted by the taper. Note the alliteration and the length of the syllables which seem to make the sound suit the sense.

341. *Star of Arcady*, any star in the constellation of the Great Bear. *Arcady*, Arcadia, the mountainous region in the centre of the Peloponnesus, which was the home of Callisto and her son Arcas, who were changed by Zeus into the constellations of the Great and Lesser Bear. For *Tyrian Cynosure*, see note to *L'Alleg.*, l. 80. "Tyrian," of course, refers to the sailors of Tyre, who used the lode-star as their guide, as the Greek sailors did the Greater Bear.

344. *Wattlèd cotes*, *i.e.*, the pens or enclosures formed of plaited twigs.

345. *Oaten stops.* The "pastoral reed" (or shepherd's pipe) was probably, at least in Virgil's time, a musical instrument made of oaten stalks, in which holes were cut (stops), over which the player's fingers were placed. Hence the frequent use of "oat" and its derivatives in our own pastoral poetry. *Cf.* *Lycid.*, ll. 33, 88, 188, and Spenser, *Astrophel* (Prelude, l. 1). Perhaps, too, the fact that oaten pipes were common among English rustics may have had some influence. Mr. Jerram has shown in his note on *Lycidas*, l. 33, that in Theocritus the words used for pipe lend no color to the English phrase. Virgil has "tenui . . . avena," *Ecl.*, I., 2. *Cf.* Collins's *Ode to Evening*, l. 1: "If aught of oaten stop or pastoral song."

347. *Count*, infinitive after "hear." *Cf. L'Alleg.*, ll. 52, 114.

349. *Innumerous*, *i.e.*, that cannot be numbered.

352. *Burs*, burrs.

355. *Leans* is intransitive. To supply "she" takes away much of the poetic effect. *Fraught*, freighted, loaded.

356. *What if*. Supply "she be." There is also an ellipsis of some such expression as "shall we do," "shall we say," after "what;" but the mind seizes the meaning so quickly that there is no need to supply any definite form of words.

358. This line probably refers to the Lady's sufferings, if she be in the grasp of wild beasts, savage through hunger, or of wilder men savage through lust.

359. *Over-exquisite*, over-curious, too discriminating.

360. *To cast* is perhaps best taken as an infinitive, showing the respect wherein the Younger Brother must not be "over-exquisite." The meaning of *cast the fashion* is "to form an opinion about the nature and appearance of uncertain evils." "Cast" is here used rather in its astrological sense (*e.g.*, to cast a horoscope) than as suggesting an idea of medical analysis.

362. *What need*, "why need," or "what need is there." See Abbott, § 297.

366. *To seek*, *i.e.*, so perplexed or embarrassed as to have *to seek* means of escape. Sometimes the phrase means "to be sought." *Cf. Paradise Lost*, viii., 197.

367. *Unprincipled*, *i.e.*, not grounded in the principles of "virtue's book and the sweet peace," etc.

368. *Bosoms*, "holds in her bosom." See note to *L'Alleg.*, l. 78.

369. *Single* here means "mere." It does not seem to be used in as strong a sense as in l. 204 (see note). *Noise*, sound, not necessarily loud.

370. *Not being in danger*. Supply "she;" an absolute construction equivalent to a conditional clause.

371. *Constant*. Note the force of this adjective, which is equivalent to "steadfast," "standing firm."

372. *Plight*, condition. See note to *Il Pens.*, l. 57.

373. This line introduces an often-quoted passage so true and beautiful that it needs no commentary and warrants Mr. Saintsbury's advice to the poet, "Give your days and nights to the reading of *Comus*." *Cf. Romeo and Juliet*, III., ii., 8–9.

375. *Flat sea*. Note the force of the epithet, and compare with *Lycid.*, l. 98. Contrast also with l. 97, *supra*.

376. *Seeks to*, resorts to, has recourse to. Note the autobiographical touch, unconscious perhaps, in these lines (Mark Pattison).

377. *Contemplation*. *Cf. Il Pens.*, l. 54.

378. *Plumes*, preens (*cf. prune*) or dresses her plumage (with the beak).

379. *Various bustle of resort*, *i.e.*, the varied noise and movement of places to which men resort.

380. *All to-ruffled.* Milton wrote "all to ruffled," which might mean "much too ruffled," "altogether ruffled," or "quite ruffled up," according as "to" stands for "too," or is connected with "all" or is regarded as an intensive particle as in the verb "to-break," signifying "to break in pieces." The last interpretation is probably best, certainly when the rhythm is considered, and is followed in the text.

381. Most applicable to Milton himself.

382. *Centre*, *i.e.*, of the earth.

386. *Affects*, here, "genuinely likes." There is no trace of the usual modern sense of *pretended* liking. The passage here introduced is perhaps even more beautiful in its concrete picturesqueness than the more abstract verses that precede it. The Elder Brother, as Warton has observed, deals with philosophy, the Younger with fact. Their dispositions, consonant with their years, are thus contrasted, but not in a dramatic manner. We feel instinctively that Milton is speaking through the mouths of both, although the magnificent tribute to the power of Chastity is more especially characteristic of the youth whose purity at Cambridge compelled the admiration of his fellows.

388. Compare with this exquisite verse *Par. Lost*, iii., 45–47:

> "But cloud instead, and ever-during dark
> Surrounds me, from the cheerful ways of men
> Cut off—."

389. *Senate house*—probably, as Verity suggests, Milton was thinking of the Roman *curia*.

390. *Weeds.* See note to *L'Alleg.*, l. 120. *Cf. Il. Pens.*, ll. 167–174.

391. *Beads*, rosary. The hermit is the conventional ascetic, Milton's puritanism here, as elsewhere, not keeping him from appreciating the poetic side of many things with which he had no intellectual sympathy.

393. *Hesperian.* The Hesperides were three nymphs, daughters of Hesperus, who were commissioned to guard the golden apples of Juno. They dwelt on the borders of the western world, somewhere near Mount Atlas, in a garden abounding in wonderful fruits. They were assisted in their watch by the dragon (l. 395) Ladon, whom Hercules, according to one account, killed when he accomplished his labor of securing the Hesperian apples. See *Class. Dict.* and note to l. 4. *Cf.* ll. 981–83 and the beautiful poem to which they serve as a motto,

Tennyson's *The Hesperides*, which the poet for some unknown reason omitted in later editions of his works. The following lines form the opening of the Song of the Nymphs and are given here because the poem may not be easily accessible:

"The golden apple, the golden apple, the hallowed fruit,
Guard it well, guard it warily,
Singing airily,
Standing about the charmèd root.
Round about all is mute,
As the snow-field on the mountain-peaks,
As the sand-field at the mountain-foot.
Crocodiles in briny creeks
Sleep and stir not: all is mute.
If ye sing not, if ye make false measure,
We shall lose eternal pleasure,
Worth eternal want of rest.
Laugh not loudly: watch the treasure
Of the wisdom of the West."

394. *Had need*, should have of necessity. *Need* is here an adverb for which we now use *needs*, the genitive of the noun. *Cf. Paradise Lost*, ii., 413.

395. *Unenchanted*, *i.e.*, not to be enchanted. See note to *L'Alleg.*, l. 40.

398. *Unsunned.* Note the force of the epithet, which is much stronger than "hidden."

401. *Danger*, etc. Supply "that." The idea is that it is useless to bid him hope that Danger will forego an opportunity and let a helpless maiden pass. *Wink on*, however, as Browne notes, may mean, "close the eyes to," *i.e.*, "forego," or "wink to a confederate." In the latter case Danger will use Opportunity as a partner in his design.

402. *A single* might possibly be used as equivalent to an emphatic "any;" but I think that here it plainly means "one who is by herself" or "goes alone," and I have inserted a comma to bring out this sense.

403. This sonorous verse owes much of its charm to the epithet *surrounding*, which, as Bell notes, was not thoroughly adopted in its sense of "encompassing" at the time Milton wrote. For its derivation see Skeat.

404. *It recks me not*, I am not considering, I pay no heed to. *Cf. Lycid.*, l. 122. "Reck" originally meant to "regard," and was not necessarily impersonal in its use as here. *Cf. reckless*, and see Skeat.

407. *Unownèd* is probably equivalent here to "unprotected." She will seem unprotected to one who has perceived that she is "un-

owned," that is, unaccompanied by any male relative to whom the care of her person would naturally belong.

408. *Infer*, argue.

409. *Without all doubt*, *i.e.*, beyond all doubt : a Latinism (Bell).

415. The redundant syllable after the second foot of this verse produces much the same effect, owing to the considerable pause that follows, that is seen in the broken verse above (l. 407).

419. *If Heaven*, etc., a concessive clause, though conditional in form ; *if*, "even if we grant that," etc.

421. *In cómplete steel*. The same phrase is in *Hamlet*, I., iv., 52, and Warton quotes other examples of its use. That Milton was thinking of Phineas Fletcher's *Purple Island* x., 27–32, when he wrote these lines is believed by Warton and Verity, but seems hardly possible. *Has* is not frequent in Milton, but here the more stately *hath* would have been wanting in euphony on account of the proximity of two "thats." *Cf.* l. 31.

423. *Trace*, track. *Unharbored*, *i.e.*, not affording shelter.

424. *Infámous*, *i.e.*, having a bad reputation (among travellers). *Cf.* Horace, *Odes.*, I., iii., 20, "infames scopulos," and his famous "Integer vitæ," I., xxii. *Cf.* also *Fair Infant*, l. 12.

426. *Bandite*, now bandit, an outlaw (Italian, *bandito*). Shakspere has *bandetto*. See Skeat. *Mountaineer* no longer retains its bad sense (as in Shakspere), since civilization has reached most mountainous regions.

428. *Very*, here an adjective ; it is stronger than *true* or *real* (Latin *verus*), and is nearly equivalent to "in its own person." *Cf.* l. 646.

429. *Cf.* *L'Alleg.*, ll. 3–4, and note to l. 8, and Pope's *Eloisa to Abelard*, l. 20 : "Ye grots and caverns shagg'd with horrid thorn."

430. *Unblenched*, unflinching. See Skeat. *Cf.* Shakspere's lines quoted in note to *Il Pens.*, l. 67.

432. *Some say*, etc. It is usual to compare with this noble passage the well-known lines in *Hamlet* (I., i., 158 *seq.*).

> "Some say that, ever against that season comes
> Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,
> The bird of dawning singeth all night long:
> And then, they say, no spirit dares stir abroad."

Still closer to Milton's version are these lines from *The Faithful Shepherdess* (I., i., see note to l. 205), which must have impressed Milton at one time or another :

> "Yet I have heard (my mother told it me
> And now I do believe it), if I keep
> My virgin-flower uncropt, pure, chaste, and fair,

No goblin, wood-god, fairy, elf, or fiend,
Satyr, or other power that haunts the groves,
Shall hurt my body, or by vain illusion
Draw me to wander after idle fires;
Or voices calling me in dead of night,
To make me follow, and so tole me on
Through mire and standing pools to find my ruin:
. . . .
Sure there is a power
In that great name of virgin, that binds fast
All rude uncivil bloods, all appetites
That break their confines: then, strong chastity
Be thou my strongest guard, for here I'll dwell
In opposition against fate and hell!"

This is fine poetry, but Milton has far surpassed it. *Cf.* ll. 205–220, *L'Alleg.*, l. 104, and *Paradise Lost*, ix., 634–42.

433. *Cf. Il Pens.*, l. 93 *seq.* and note.

434. *Blue meagre hag.* There were witches and spirits of various colors, but whether "blue" is here used to denote the sort of witch or to describe her appearance is doubtful.

435. *Curfew.* See note to *Il. Pens.*, l. 74. The stubborn ghost who would not be exorcised (or "laid"), would be allowed to walk abroad from curfew time till the first cock-crow. This superstition is frequently referred to in poetry. The connection of evil spirits with mines (l. 436) is also familiar.

436. *Goblin.* See note to *L'Alleg.*, l. 105. *Swart*, swarthy, black. *Cf. Lycid.*, l. 138.

438. *Ye*, here singular, like our modern "you."

439. *Schools.* The use of this word seems to imply that the speaker will proceed, as he does do, to argue about Greek mythology, just as a member of one of the Greek philosophic schools might have done.

440. *Testify*, bear witness to, or give evidence of.

442. *Silver-shafted.* Bell calls attention to the applicability of this adjective, whether Diana be regarded as goddess of the chase, bearing arrows, or as goddess of the moon, sending forth silver rays.

443. *Brinded*, brindled, *i.e.*, streaked or spotted. Shakspere has *brinded cat*, in the Witches' Song in *Macbeth* (IV., i., 1). See Skeat.

444. *Mountain pard*, probably the cat-o'-mountain, or catamount, a kind of wildcat. *Cf.* l. 71.

445. *Bolt*, arrow.

447. *Snaky-headed Gorgon shield.* The Gorgons were three monstrous sisters, of whom many legends were told. Medusa alone was mortal, and Perseus overcame her by the aid of the gods. Her snaky

head was placed by "wise Minerva" upon her ægis with the effect described in the poem. See *Class. Dict.* *Cf. Paradise Lost*, ii., 611.

449. *Freezed*, illustrates the tendency of the weak conjugation to invade the strong.

451. *Dashed*, stronger than our modern "abashed."

452. *Blank*, utter, complete.

455. *Liveried.* See note to *L'Alleg.*, l. 62. *Lackey*, a verb derived from "lackey," a foot boy, but here used in the more dignified sense of "to minister."

459. *Oft converse.* *Oft* is an adjective, meaning "frequent." *Converse*, communion, intercourse.

461. *Temple.* The metaphor is scriptural and Shaksperian.

462. *Turns.* We should naturally expect the subjunctive here after the use of "begin" in l. 460. Perhaps the indicative is used to emphasize as a fact the result indicated, whereas "begin to cast" not being intended to be definite as to duration and amount, can well be put in the subjunctive. So "be made," being indefinite as to time, is used in l. 463. If Milton had written "turn," it would have been doubtful whether he meant it to be an infinitive, like "to cast," or a subjunctive. Warton solves the difficulty by printing "begins."

465. *Lavish*, a very forcible epithet, referring to the *incontinence*, the *unrestrained* character of the "act of sin." For *lewd*, which originally meant "ignorant," see Skeat. The whole passage is based upon a Socratic doctrine expounded in Plato's *Phædo* (81).

468. *Imbodies and imbrutes*, takes on a body and becomes brutish. Both verbs are used intransitively, but are now nearly always employed in a transitive sense. *Cf. Paradise Lost*, ix., 166:

"This essence to incarnate and imbrute."

Milton did not coin "imbrute," as is sometimes stated, for Warton found it (or rather "*em*brute") in Giles Fletcher.

471. *Charnel*, a place of burial containing carcases (Latin *caro*). *Cf. carnal* (l. 474). See Skeat.

473. *As loth.* Supply "being." *It* refers to some one of the "shadows." If taken with "soul," as Bell suggests, one must allow for a change of gender, as "soul" is referred to by "her" and "she" in the passage above.

474. *And linked.* Supply "having" or possibly "being." *Carnal*, *cf.* l. 471. *Sensualty*, sensuality.

478. This most exquisite verse of a noble and well-known passage has been often compared with Shakspere's

"As sweet and musical
As bright Apollo's lute, strung with his hair."
—*L. L. L.*, IV., iii., 342–3.

480. *Crude*, raw (Latin *crudus*), unripe (*cf. Lycid.*, l. 3); hence, unrefined, coarse, as here. Note well the epithets in this passage, all of which are admirably chosen. *Crabbed* (l. 477) may mean either bitter, sour (like a crab-apple), or peevish, irritable, the former meaning being preferable, as more in contrast with *nectared* (l. 479), an adjective derived from the well-known "nectar," or drink of the gods.

482. *Methought*. See note to l. 171.

483. *Night-foundered, i.e.*, lost in the night, as ships are foundered in the sea. *Cf. Paradise Lost*, i., 204, where Bentley read "nigh-foundered!"

484. *Neighbor*, neighboring. *Cf.* l. 576. Spenser in his *Shepherd's Calendar*, Ecl. vi., has "neyghbour groves" on which the "glosse" comments: "A straunge phrase in English, but word for word expressing the Latine *vicina nemora*."

487. *Best draw*, we had best draw (our swords).

489. *Defense, i.e.*, self-defense.

490–658. The Attendant Spirit now enters, attired like the shepherd Thyrsis. He inquires after his young mistress, and finding that the Brothers have lost her, concludes that it was certainly she whom he had heard singing near the haunts of Comus (whom he describes for the benefit of his hearers). The two Brothers lament her fate, but the Elder remains firm in his philosophy. Thyrsis then tells them how he has secured from another shepherd a magic plant of more virtue than the Homeric Moly, by means of which the enchantments of the lascivious god may be overcome. The Elder Brother then bids him lead them on to the rescue.

The entire passage is in blank verse of the kind already described, save ll. 495–512, which are in rhymed couplets. Milton may, as has been suggested, have intended to imitate in these lines, which describe Thyrsis, the cadences of pastoral poems, *e.g.*, *The Shepherd's Calendar*, *Britannia's Pastorals*, etc. This reason does not apply with much force to the short dialogue (ll. 509–12), and Milton had plenty of examples in the regular drama of this apparently irregular dropping into rhyme. He may have indulged in it merely for the sake of variety, or as Warton says, he may have "caught a fit of rhyming from Fletcher's pastoral comedy." The dramatic quality of the scene is no higher than that displayed elsewhere in the masque, and there is only one poetical passage that is universally known, that which concludes with

"I was all ear
And took in strains that might create a soul
Under the ribs of Death" (ll. 560–62).

The repetition involved in the description of Comus (ll. 520–539), and the second long speech of Thyrsis, with its description of the plant Haemony, seem to delay the action just where it should begin to gather swiftness, and to make the scene too similar in most respects to the preceding one. See the Introductory Note as to the propriety of these strictures.

490. *That hallo.* The Attendant Spirit has plainly shouted before entering. The stage direction given in Lawes's edition of 1637 is explicit on this point. *Should.* The student will be much assisted here and elsewhere by recalling the radical significance of this word (obligation).

491. Milton may have purposely married sound to sense by giving this verse its strident close.

492. Stress *young.* This is required by the metre, and is the natural emphasis by which an old servant would distinguish his masters, father and son.

494. *Thyrsis.* See note to *L'Alleg.*, l. 83. In the *Epitaphium Damonis* Milton himself is Thyrsis. In M. Arnold's noble elegy Clough is Thyrsis and Arnold, Corydon.

495. *Huddling.* Originally crowding, then performing a thing hastily (Skeat); here hurrying. There is an obvious reminiscence of the Orpheus legend in the verse. *Madrigal*, a pastoral song then much in favor. Lawes and Milton's father had composed them, but the compliment conveyed by the passage is, of course, intended for Lawes, who was taking the part of Thyrsis. *Cf.* ll. 86–88 and Marlowe's *Passionate Shepherd*:

> "By shallow rivers to whose falls
> Melodious birds sing madrigals."

Warton and Dr. Johnson complain that the whole passage delays the action, which is true, but we should not care to part with it.

501. *Next joy.* Bell explains this as referring to the Younger Brother, *i.e.*, thou, his next joy. It seems probable, however, that "next" may be equivalent to "closest," "dearest," and that the phrase may belong to the Elder Brother, who alone addresses Thyrsis throughout the scene. Verity, who paraphrases "next" as "dearest," would seem by so doing to hold this view.

502. *Toy.* *Cf. Il Pens.*, l. 4.

503. *Stealth,* (most probably) the thing stolen (by the wolf), but it is possible that the word may be used in its abstract sense of stealthiness.

506. *To*, compared to, in comparison with.

508. *How chance,* how does it happen that (Abbott, § 37). The expression is frequent in Shakspere, who seems to treat "chance" as a

verb followed by a noun clause. The fuller form, "how chances it," occurs in *Hamlet*, II., ii., 343.

509. *Sadly*, here seriously, as frequently in authors of the time. *Cf.* l. 189.

511. *Ay me!* Ah me! (Ital., *ahimé;* Old French, *aymi*). There is no connection with *ay* or *aye*, meaning affirmation. See Skeat. *Cf.* *Lycid.*, ll. 56, 154. "True" and "shew" rhyme.

512. *Prithee*, I pray thee.

513. *Ye.* See note to l. 216. The nominative is used here for the dative. *Vain*, futile, beside the point. *Fabulous*, "mere matter of legend" (Verity).

515. *Sage.* *Cf.* *L'Alleg.*, l. 17, *Il Pens.*, l. 117. *Heavenly Muse.* *Cf.* *Paradise Lost.*, i., 6; iii., 19.

516. *Storied*, told, related. See note to *Il Pens.*, l. 159.

517. *Chimæras.* The particular Chimæra sung by Homer and Virgil (who are the chief poets referred to above) was a monster with a lion's head, goat's body, and dragon's tail. It breathed fire and was, like Cerberus (see note *L'Alleg.*, l. 2), the offspring of Echidna and Typhon. Bellerophon, mounted upon Pegasus, overcame it. *Cf.* the modern use of the word in the sense of an extravagant fancy. *Enchanted isles* refers probably to those of Circe and Calypso (*Odyssey*). Verity thinks the reference is to the "Wandering Islands" of the *Fairy Queen*, II., xii., 11 *seq.*, and to Tasso's account of the isle of Armida. (*Jerusalem Delivered*, Cantos xv.–xvi.) The phrase "of old" tells, however, somewhat against this view, as well as l. 518. *Cf.* the great passage in *Paradise Lost*, ii., 614–628, especially the concluding verse,

"Gorgons and Hydras and Chimæras dire."

518. Refers to the visits to Hades of mortals, like Orpheus and Hercules.

519. *Be.* See note to l. 12.

520. *Navel*, centre. Pindar calls the temple of Apollo at Delphi, "the navel of the earth" (Warton).

526. *Murmurs*, murmured spells or enchantments.

529. *Fixes*, has "poison" for subject and "likeness" for object. *Unmolding*, etc., *i.e.*, turning into another shape the marks of thought or reason stamped ("mintage" and "charactered") on the face.

531. *Crofts*, etc., small hillside fields overhanging ("brow") the low ("bottom") glade. *Brow* is here a verb (*cf.* *L'Alleg.*, l. 8), and *bottom* an adjective. Verity makes "brow" equivalent to "slope down," but "overhang" makes the picture wilder and conforms better to Milton's other uses of the word.

533. *Rout.* See notes to first *Stage Directions*. *Monstrous*. See note to *Lycid.*, l. 158.

534. *Stabled.* Those editors are probably right who regard this participle as equivalent to "in their dens." *Cf. Paradise Lost*, xi., 750–52:

> "And in their palaces,
> Where luxury late reigned, sea-monsters whelped
> And stabled."

Bell's reference to *Aeneid*, vi., 179, where a wood is called "stabula alta ferarum," supports this view. "Stabled" may also mean "caught fast," but it seems better to consider it as used here in a metaphorical sense. Browne's citation from Virgil, *Ecl.*, iii., 80, "triste lupus stabulis," is beside the point, for there is no sign of metaphor in the use of "stabulis."

535. *Hecate.* See note to l. 135.

539. *Unweeting.* Miltonic for "unwitting;" "weet" being a corruption of "wit," to know. See Skeat. *Cf. Fair Infant*, l. 23.

540. *By then.* Bell prefers to consider the relative "when" omitted, which would make the phrase nearly equivalent to "what time" or "by the time that." The obvious alternative is to consider the clause introduced as parenthetical; this, to my ear, renders the metrical effect less pleasing than that produced if the first interpretation be adopted.

542. *Dew-besprent*, sprinkled with dew. "Besprent" is now obsolete save in poetry. See *Cent. Dict.* Some suppose *knot-grass* intended for marjoram, others, for florin-grass.

544. *Interwove*, or interwoven (both forms were allowable). It is hard to see how the participle can logically be connected with any other word than "ivy," yet grammatically it seems to belong to "bank."

546. This line contains the gist of *Il Penseroso*, of Fletcher's song, "Hence all you vain delights," and of Burton's *Abstract of Melancholy*.

547. *Meditate*, etc., *i.e.*, sing his pastoral ditties. *Cf.* note to *Lycid.*, l 66.

548. *Had* may be equivalent to "should have," but not necessarily. If "had her fill," refers to the close of the singing, the next sentence forces the use of the auxiliary verb in a prose explanation; but if the phrase refers merely to the culmination of "fancy's" enjoyment when the song was at its height, the verb may be explained as a simple preterite indicative. *Close*, "the final cadence of a piece of music" (Browne); it is the object of "ere" used as a preposition, or, less probably, the subject of a supplied verb like "was made."

549. *Wonted.* See note to l. 332.

550. *Barbarous.* The student should trace the derivation of this word; he will then perceive its peculiar fitness here. "Barbarous dissonance" occurs again in *Paradise Lost*, vii., 32.

551. *Them.* "To" is omitted, as frequently among the Elizabethans. Bell takes the pronoun to refer to "the *sounds* implied in dissonance;" but it seems more likely that it refers loosely to those who were making "the wonted roar," the epithet "wonted" having already referred back to Comus and his "monstrous rout," who would be in the minds of both hearers and speaker.

552. *Stop of sudden silence*, etc., *i.e.*, the pause in the "wonted roar," which gives rise to sudden silence, and is caused by the command of Comus, when he perceives that the Lady is approaching (see l. 145), affords respite or rest to the drowsy and affrighted steeds "that draw the litter of close-curtained Sleep," who have been kept in a state of uneasiness during the uproar. Whether these are the steeds of Sleep or those of Night who draw her chariot in which Sleep is borne along with her, does not clearly appear; but Night is usually conveyed by steeds and Sleep is "dewy-feathered" (*Il Pens.*, l. 146). Warton shows that Claudian and Statius transfer Night's chariot and steeds to Sleep. The *Cambridge MS.* has "drowsy flighted," *i.e.*, that fly drowsily, a reading that has commended itself to some editors on account of the passage in 2 *Henry VI.* (IV., i., 3–6), in which occurs the line,

> "Who, with their drowsy, slow and flagging wings"

—used with reference to the "jades" of Night. But it is obviously less forcible to represent sudden silence as giving "respite" to steeds already flying drowsily, than to represent it as giving respite to steeds who were both drowsy and affrighted. That "frighted" is "freighted" is even more untenable. The reading here adopted is that of the three earliest editions.

554. *Curtained* is the epithet applied to Sleep in *Macbeth* (II., i., 51).

555. This verse refers to the Song (ll. 230–243). The passage introduced is one of extraordinary beauty. Compare Gray's use of the epithet *solemn-breathing* in *The Progress of Poesy*:

> "Oh! Sovereign of the willing soul,
> Parent of sweet and solemn-breathing airs,
> Enchanting shell!"

557. *That even silence*, etc. (So) that even Silence was taken (out of herself?) as by a spell before she was aware of it and was made to wish that she might forego her nature and very existence, provided

that she could continually ("still") be so displaced (*i.e.*, by the song). Editors naturally compare *Paradise Lost*, iv., 603 : "She all night long her amorous descant sung ; Silence was pleased," where "she" is the nightingale.

558. *Took*, charmed is Shaksperian. *Cf. Hamlet*, I., i., 162–63. (Verity.)

560. *All* limits "I." It will be interesting for the student to make a collection of passages and poems in which the greater English poets have paid tribute to the power of music. He will begin with Shakspere's great lines in *M. of V.*, V., i., 70–88, and will speedily add Dryden's two noble odes, and Collins on the *Passions*, with many other poems and passages, none of which will surpass this bold and sublime image of Milton's, which is as likely to have been founded on the story in Genesis (a dead man taking the place of the sleeping Adam and his own soul being put back instead of another soul being new-created), as upon the illustration in Quarles's *Emblems* of an infant inside a skeleton, according to the supposition of some editors. There is no need, however, of either of these far-fetched explanations.

565. *Harrowed* is probably a metaphorical use of the verb derived from "harrow," the agricultural instrument used for breaking the soil. That it is here a variant of "harried" is improbable.

567. *Near*. Supply "to" rather than "is," in order to obtain the better rendering of the line.

568. *Lawns*. *Cf.* note to *L'Alleg.*, l. 71.

572. *Signs*. Explained in l. 644.

573. *Prevent*. Anticipate (probably).

574. *Wished*. We now say "wished for." *Cf. Paradise Lost*, i., 208; vi., 150.

575. *Such two*, two people of this and that, or such and such, appearance.

576. *Neighbor*. See note to l. 484.

579. This line will be clearer if "which continued," or some such expression, be supplied after "flight."

584. *Keep*, is most probably an imperative, as is *lean ;* but it is possible to supply "I" with both verbs, or with the first only.

585. *Safely*, with confidence. *Period*, sentence.

586. *For me*, as far as I am concerned.

591. If "should prove" or "to prove" be supplied after "meant," the line will be clear. L. 592 shows that *which* is not a dative.

592. *Happy* refers to the result of the "trial." The phrase hardly means "trial of happiness." This entire passage is notable for its high philosophy and has seemed to many to be couched in equally high poetry. It is not, in my opinion, up to Milton's highest

reaches in the latter respect, except perhaps in the noble lines embodying ancient conceptions of earth and sky:

> "The pillared firmament is rottenness,
> And earth's base built on stubble."

The image immediately preceding (ll. 595–97), based probably on the idea that evil, being material as compared with goodness, will be resolved into a chaos similar to that out of which the material universe has sprung, and into which it is to be dissolved, is perhaps all the more suggestive on account of its lack of concreteness, but does not appeal so vividly to the imagination. Ll. 589–90 are seemingly too epigrammatic for the greatest poetic effect, and there is a suspicion of rhetoric in ll. 599–609, which is rarer in Milton than in any other of our poets —so rare indeed that a critic would forbear even to hint such a thing were he not anxious to set off Milton's sublimest heights against his lower levels, which in their turn may be set off by comparison with the highest levels of other men.

597. *Self-consumed.* A syllable is lacking in this verse. As Milton did not sound the *ed*, he probably meant the extra pause to fill up the foot.

602. *For*, as for. *Let him*, etc., is equivalent to a concessive clause. *Girt.* See note to l. 214. *Cf.* with this part of the speech Schiller's lines in *Wilhelm Tell*, I., iv., beginning

> "Und wohnt' er droben auf dem Eispalast."

604. *Acheron*, a bitter stream of Hades, often used for the whole region. *Cf. Paradise Lost*, ii., 578, "Sad Acheron of sorrow, black and deep." Todd noted the phrase "sooty flags," in a similar connection in P. Fletcher's *Locusts* (1627).

605. *Harpies and Hydras.* The Harpies were three monsters that befouled whatever they touched. They had the face of a woman, the body of a vulture, wings, and sharp claws. Their attack on Aeneas is described in the *Aeneid*, iii., 212. The Hydra was a many-headed monster, the offspring of Echidna and Typhon, that infested the neighborhood of Lake Lerna in the Peloponnesus, and was finally destroyed by Hercules. The plural form is perhaps used here, as Masson and Bell suggest, as "a general name for monstrous water-serpents." The names of both classes of monsters are familiarly used in literature.

606. *Ind*, often used for "India." *Cf. Paradise Lost*, ii., 2:

> "Outshone the wealth of Ormus and of Ind."

607. *Purchase* (O. F., *purchacer*, chase-for) originally meant "to acquire," or, as a noun, "acquisition." *Cf.* its legal use, as the act of obtaining an estate in any manner other than by inheritance or escheat. Latterly the idea of money given in exchange has been involved with the original idea of acquisition. Here, as often with the Elizabethans, the word is equivalent to "prey," "booty." *Back.* Notice the frequent use in poetry of this adverb to intensify a verb in *re-*. *Cf. back recoil*, l. 593.

610. *Yet*, *i.e.*, in spite of all that he is about to say. *Emprise*, enterprise.

611. *Stead*, good, advantage. See note to *Il Pens.*, l. 3.

612. *Other*, different; hence the adverb "far."

614. *Unthread*, loosen, unknit. Verity's notion that perhaps we ought to press the metaphor of unthreading a needle is exceedingly queer.

617. *Relation*, narration. *Care and utmost shifts*, etc., *i.e.*, the fact that he was at his wits' ends considering "how to secure the Lady from surprisal" brought to his mind, etc. *Care*, consideration. *Shifts*, the contrivances a man is put to when he is in an embarrassing position (hence the expression, "a shifty man"). Both nouns are qualified by the clause involved in l. 618. That "shifts" means simply "reflection," as Verity holds, is unlikely.

619. Milton's best friend, Charles Diodati, son of an Italian physician living in London on account of his Protestantism, is supposed to be referred to here, because Milton, in the *Epitaphium Damonis*, has a reference to the latter's knowledge of medicinal botany, which seems to indicate that he was in the habit of instructing the poet therein:

"Tu mihi percurres medicos, tua gramina, succos,
Helleborumque, humilesque crocos, foliumque hyacinthi,
Quasque habet ista palus herbas, artesque medentum" (ll. 150–52).

Verse 620 indicates that the "certain shepherd lad" was not much to look at, and I can discover nothing in the Latin poems connected with Diodati to show that Milton was ever impressed by any charm in him save that natural to a genial and cultivated nature. The insistence on the lack of personal pulchritude and the rather leading position taken by the speaker are not, however, exactly in accord with the prevailing tone of the *Epit. Dam.* and *Eleg. Lib.*, i. and vi.

621. *Virtuous.* See note to *Il Pens.*, l. 113. Note how well the pastoral effect of these lines is maintained; the diction is smooth and straightforward and the rhythm simple and sweet.

626. *Scrip*, wallet.

627. *Simples*, herbs used as single ingredients in compounded medicines.

630. *Culled me out*, picked out for me. *Me* is an ethical dative.

633. *Bore.* The grammatical subject is "leaf," but as leaves can hardly be said to bear flowers, we must either substitute "plant" or "root" as subject, or else imagine that Milton used "leaf" to represent the whole of the plant showing above ground. He may, however, use "bore" as indicating merely that the flower rose above the leaves. Metrically this line is marked by irregularities not uncommon in dramatic verse; verse 636 is also irregular, but is more easily read when "med'cinal" is properly slurred.

634. *Like*, *i.e.*, *un*-esteemed.

635. *Clouted shoon*, patched (whether for mending or strengthening) shoes. "Clumsy" or "heavy" is evidently the epithet here intended rather than "patched," to indicate the poverty of the wearer. "Shoon" is an archaic plural familiar in our older poetry, Shakspere having "clouted shoon" more than once.

636. *Moly*, a magical plant that Hermes gave Ulysses to enable the latter to resist the wiles of Circe. *Od.*, x., 280, *seq.* In l. 651 Milton seems to have the same Homeric passage in his mind.

638. *Haemony.* Milton appears to have invented the plant and given it a name. It has been thought that he called it after *Haemonia*, an old name for Thessaly, the land of magic. *Cf.* Spenser's *Astrophel*, l. 3:

"About the grassie bancks of Haemony."

If Coleridge's supposition (referred to by Bell), that the prickles and golden flower signify the sorrows and triumphs of the Christian life, be accepted, the qualification "but not in this soil" must be regarded as a not altogether lovely puritanical thrust at the poet's native land. It then becomes interesting to inquire what Milton meant by the phrase "in another country." Throughout the whole passage one is reminded of *The Faithful Shepherdess* (II., ii.).

639. *Sovran.* See note to l. 41. Has the familiar use of "sovereign" (of the highest efficiency), in connection with cures, medicines, and the like, been influenced by the idea of the royal touch curing diseases like the king's-evil?

640. A dry east wind was supposed to produce mildew.

641. The *Furies* or Eumenides were grim ministers of divine vengeance, who punished the guilty both on earth and in Hades. They are usually represented as three in number, and are frequently mentioned in literature ancient and modern. See *Class. Dict.*, and *cf.* especially the legend of Orestes. The epithet "ghastly" and the use of "apparition" tell against Verity's idea that Milton meant simply "evil fairies." Verse 640 sums up the more trivial uses of the plant; the present verse shows its highest value.

642. *Pursed*, etc., *i.e.*, put it in his bag, paying small attention ("reckoning," *cf. Lycid.*, l. 116) to it. Note the metaphorical use of "purse," *i.e.*, to wrinkle up the lips like the mouth of a bag when it is drawn tight. The carrying of a plant or other charm was a common feature of mediæval romances; it is not entirely abandoned among rural people.

645. *Disguised.* See l. 166.

646. *Lime-twigs*, *i.e.*, snares spread by "his spells," referring to the practice of catching birds on twigs smeared with bird-lime.

649. *Necromancer.* Let the student search out the derivation of this word, which has nothing to do with "niger," black, as the phrase "black art" would imply. Another touch from the romances. The *Fairy Queen* (II., xii., 57) probably furnished another source of inspiration, and perhaps the *Tempest* and Tasso were remembered.

655. Editors think this line founded on *Aeneid*, viii., 252–3, where Cacus, a son of Vulcan, pursued by Hercules, does "vomit smoke." The diction and rhythm of the four last lines of this speech are finely Miltonic.

658. *Bear* is an optative.

Stage Directions. Deliciousness is put for things that have the qualities summed up in the abstract noun. *Goes about*, undertakes. See *Cent. Dict.*, *s.v.* "go."

659–813. The scene now changes from the "wild wood" to a "stately palace." While his rabble feasts, Comus endeavors to tempt the Lady to drain his magic liquor. Though held fastbound in an enchanted chair, she resists him nobly, in spite of his eloquent recital of the charms of licentious pleasure. She replies so finely in defence of virtue that her adversary is compelled to confess to himself the fear that her words are "set off by some superior power." He nerves himself, however, to one last appeal before the Brothers appear upon the scene.

In dramatic power there is a considerable advance over the two preceding scenes. The characters both of Comus and the Lady gain in strength, and it is almost needless to say that their respective tributes to pleasure and virtue are couched in the noblest poetry. There is no such imaginative image as that which ennobles verses 560–62, but for pure exquisiteness of diction it would be hard to parallel such verses as

> "Love-darting eyes or tresses like the morn" (753),

or

> "Against the sun-clad power of Chastity" (782),

or

> "the sage
> And serious doctrine of Virginity" (786–7).

661. *Daphne*, a nymph who was pursued by Apollo, and was at her prayer changed into a laurel-tree. Hence the epithet "root-bound," which may grammatically agree with either "you" or "Daphne." The whole construction, while it would be intolerable in prose, is nevertheless highly poetical and easily comprehended.

665. *While*, so long as.

668. *Be*. See note to l. 12.

669. Another ideal genealogy without full personification. *Cf.* the opening lines of *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*.

670. *Returns*. This word seems to be used either with reference to the quality of "freshness" in the blood, or else to indicate that the idea of "sap" is also involved.

672. *Cordial julep*. "Cordial" is something good for the *heart*. "Julep" is a sweet drink. See Skeat for its derivation from a Persian word meaning "rose-water;" as well as for "syrup" (l. 674), which is from an Arabic word meaning "to drink." "Mint *julep*" is a familiar drink in parts of America. The passage beginning with this line and ending with l. 705 is in the *Cambridge MS.* transposed and inserted after l. 755, ll. 706–755 following immediately on l. 671. The change heightens the dramatic effect.

673. *His*, its. See note to *Il Pens.*, l. 128.

674. Compare with Keats's exquisite verse in *The Eve of St. Agnes* (xxx.), "And lucent syrops, tinct with cinnamon."

675. *Nepenthes* meant in Greek "sorrow-dispelling." The drink referred to is sufficiently described in the verses that follow, which are based on *Odys.*, iv., 219–30. *Cf. F. Q.*, IV., iii., 43. *Jove-born Helena* is too familiar in literature to require description, but it may be as well to remind the student that Marlowe's Faustus summed up the mysterious power of her beauty when he asked:

> "Was this the face that launch'd a thousand ships,
> And burnt the topless towers of Ilium ?"

678. This verse will be plainer if "nor is it" be understood before it.

685. *Unexempt condition*, etc., a condition from which there is no exemption for frail mortals. L. 687 gives this condition.

688. This line is an adjective clause agreeing with "you" (l. 682). If a semicolon be used at the end of the preceding verse, it will be easier to understand "you" than to go back so far to make the agreement. Several verses in this speech recall some of the arguments used in the early sonnets of Shakspere.

694. *Aspects*, countenances, rather than general appearances or objects, as the next verse shows.

695. *Oughly-headed.* Milton's spelling of "ugly-headed" (see first *Stage Directions*). *Guard* is an optative.

698. *Visored falsehood, i.e.*, falsehood making use of a false face (visor, mask), referring to Comus's disguise. See l. 166.

700. *Liquorish*, an obsolete spelling of "lickerish," tempting to the appetite.

702. *Treasonous offer.* "Offer" is here used, of course, for the thing offered; it is called treasonable ("treasonous"), probably because to taste it would be an act of treason to Virtue. The offer can hardly be treasonable in itself, for Comus is true to his nature and principles in making it. *None but such*, etc. The idea is found in Euripides (*Medea*, l. 618).

707. This line has been variously commented on. Milton represents to himself the Stoic philosophers as learned men or "doctors," who would, if translated to his own times, be adorned with hoods or robes trimmed with fur. Then he qualifies these "doctors" with the epithet "budge," which seems to mean literally lambskin with the wool dressed outward as worn on certain hoods, etc. This would almost justify the charge of tautology, but as "budge" also has the derived meaning of "solemn," this charge fails.

708. This line refers to the well-known tub of Diogenes, one of the chief philosophers of the Cynic school.

714. *But all*, etc., except entirely. *Curious*, as frequently in the sense of "fastidious," "nicely discriminating."

715. *Set.* Supply "she."

719. *Hutched*, stored up, from "hutch," a box. *Cf. rabbit-hutch.*

720. *To store her children with.* It is better to supply "them" and preserve the parallelism with verse 717. "Wherewith" makes no change in the meaning, but seems to impair the force of the parallelism, which Milton must have intended to introduce. *Store*, furnish.

721. *Pet*, a peevish or capricious fit. *Pulse, i.e.*, such vegetables as peas, beans, etc.

722. *Frieze*, a coarse woollen cloth, originally made in Friesland.

728. *Who* refers to Nature. Bell makes it refer to *her* in "her sons," *i.e.*, "Live like Nature's bastards, not the sons of her who," etc., which to my mind, by throwing an emphasis on "her," destroys much of the force of the antithesis between "bastards" and "sons," in l. 727.

729. *Waste*, over-abundant; hence, superfluous. There is no need to adopt the suggestion that the word is here used like a participle, *i.e.*, wasted. See *Cent. Dict.*

730. *Cumbered, i.e.*, encumbered with a heap (Low Latin, *cumbrus*) of things. Note Milton's command of epithets: "Surcharged,"

"strangled" (*i.e.*, suffocated), "cumbered," "darked" (*i.e.*, darkened), "o'erfraught" (see note to l. 355), etc. *Plumes*, wings.

731. *Over-multitude*, outnumber.

733. *Emblaze*, set in a blaze.

734. Milton's *MS.* (as Bell notes) gives "bestud the centre with their starlight," where "centre" is centre of the earth. But for this fact one would naturally construe "the deep" (l. 733) to mean the sea, and imagine the diamonds below sending up their rays to be reflected like stars upon the surface ("forehead") of the waters, and one would support this view, as Verity does, by referring to various passages in Shakspere in which the jewels of the deep are mentioned. Then the question would arise whether "they below" refers, as Verity holds, to men (Grk., *οἱ κάτω*), or to monsters of the deep, men hardly having "shameful brows" with respect to the light of the sun. But Milton's use of "centre" makes one suspect that he passed rapidly from the "sea o'erfraught" to the centre of the earth once more (*cf.* ll. 718–19), where diamonds would more naturally be found, and conceived it as a great hollow, the vault of which ("forehead") would be flaming with gems, whose light would finally inure the gnomes and other spirits "to gaze upon the sun with shameless brows." "Deep" is used technically in mining, but its appearance here in the sense of "the depths of earth" would certainly be unusual. The whole passage, however one may understand this particular part of it, is magnificent, and in reading it one is reminded not merely of the arguments of Lucretius (*cf. De Rerum Natura*, i., 159–183) but of his rolling periods when he is at his best.

737. *Coy*, shy. *Cozened*, beguiled, cheated.

744. *It*, *i.e.*, Beauty. The underlying idea of the passage is familiar enough in poetry. *Cf.* Herrick's "Gather ye rosebuds," Waller's *Rose*, Shakspere's early sonnets, etc. Warton's quotation from *Midsummer Night's Dream*, I., i., 77–79, is singularly apposite :

> "But earthlier happy is the rose distill'd
> Than that which, withering on the virgin thorn,
> Grows, lives and dies in single blessedness."

745. *Brag*, *i.e.*, something to boast of, cause of pride. Compare this verse with l. 739 and notice the parallelism and contrast.

747. *Most*, the largest number of people possible.

748. Compare with the derivation here given that of "courtly" in l. 325. It is very doubtful whether any humorous quality is intended to attach to the play on words. The same play is found in Shakspere, *T. G. of V.*, I., i., 2.

750. *Sorry grain*, not comely in color. See note to *Il Pens.*, l. 33.

751. *Sampler*, a pattern piece of embroidery or other needlework. *Tease*, to card or comb. *Huswife's*, housewife's (note pronunciation and *cf.* hussy). The intention is to select a specimen both of the fancy and of the useful work done by house-keeping women.

752. *What need.* See note to l. 362. *Vermeil-tinctured*, vermilion-dyed, or colored like vermilion (from *vermiculus*, a little worm, *i.e.*, the cochineal insect).

753. Commentators have noted that Homer speaks of "the fair-tressed Dawn" (*Odys.*, v., 390); Sylvester had used "love-darting eyn," and Pope inherited it from Milton (*Elegy to the Memory of an Unfortunate Lady*, l. 34).

755. The passage from l. 737 to l. 755 is omitted from the *Bridgewater MS.*, and hence was not spoken in the actual performance.

758. *As mine eyes.* Supply "he has charmed" after "as." The first six lines of the speech are not addressed directly to Comus, but are hardly to be regarded as an aside. They are rather intended to show the Lady's scorn, and to give the "Juggler" a view of the inward workings of her mind.

759. *Pranked*, decked out in. *Rules*, rules of action.

760. *Bolt*, or boult, to sift, as in milling, here to refine or make subtle the arguments employed. See Skeat for the queer history of its descent from Low Latin *burra*, a coarse red cloth. This is much preferable to taking *bolt* as equivalent to "shoot out."

763. *Would*, wished.

765. *To*, for.

767. *Cf. Il Pens.*, l. 46, and *Eleg. Lib.*, vi., 55–78.

773. In scanning slur "unsuperfluous" and "even" and give "proportions" four syllables. Compare the content of these lines with the propaganda of modern philanthropists and advocates of socialism, and note how thoroughly the Lady voices Milton's own well-known opinions on the subject of personal purity.

774. *No whit* (nought), not in the least.

776. *Due*, duly. Supply "would be" after "praise." Note the superb scorn of the lines that immediately follow.

779. The passage from this line to l. 806 is wanting in both the *Cambridge* and *Bridgewater MSS.* Milton's additions give us some admirable verses we could not well spare.

780. *Enow*, enough. See note to *Lycid.*, l. 114.

783. *Fain*, glad or gladly. *End*, purpose. The rhyme introduced here is best avoided in blank verse. *Cf.* ll. 828–29. Compare this portion of the speech with ll. 420–475.

785. *Notion*, idea.

790. *Dear* ("precious") and *gay* are both used to express contempt,

and perhaps there is a desire to show the change of mood in the passing for one moment from the singular to the plural pronoun.

791. *Fence*, art of defence (here by cunning arguments).

793. *Uncontrollèd*, uncontrollable (probably).

797. *Brute*, dull, insensible. Editors compare Horace, *Odes*, I., xxxiv., 9, "bruta tellus." *Nerves*, sinews. *Cf.* the closing lines with Prospero's great speech in *The Tempest* (IV., i., 151 *seq.*), a play which one is frequently reminded of in reading *Comus*.

801. *Set off*, supported, backed by. Ll. 800–806 are an aside.

802. *Though shuddering*, a transferred epithet. Supply "I am" after it. Comus himself shudders under the cold sweat that bathes him.

804. *Erebus*, a place of nether darkness through which the Shades had to pass on their way to Hades. The whole passage refers to the war between Zeus and the Titans, who espoused Saturn's cause, and to the punishment inflicted on the giants.

807. *Mere*, only, or absolute. *Direct*, directly. The next line is equivalent to "the rules of our organized company," but there is hardly any reason to hold with Keightley that we have here a *humorous* application of the language of universities. Warton thinks Milton was ridiculing the Established Church through its Canon Law. But he had in l. 391 (see note) described the typical mediæval ascetic with no touch of scorn, and even here when putting a distinctly ecclesiastical expression into the mouth of such a character as Comus, he may have thought rather of its poetic applicability than of its inherent satire. Satiric and humorous touches are not usually characteristic of poetry of such high type as this portion of *Comus*.

810. Melancholy was regarded as one of the four humors of the body; it was heavy and corrupted the blood by settling down like the dregs of wine. *Cf.* Burton's *Anatomy*, *passim*, and *Sam. Agon.*, l. 599 *seq.*

811. *Straight.* See note to *L'Alleg.*, l. 69.

814–889. The Brothers now rush in and drive Comus and his rout "in," *i.e.*, probably into some other part of the palace, whence they make good their escape, for they play no further part in the masque. The explicit injunction of the Spirit to secure the enchanter's wand (l 653) is forgotten in the confusion. The Guardian Genius now enters. In the *Cambridge* and *Bridgewater MSS.*, where he is called "Daemon," he enters with the Brothers. The change is fitting in view of the chiding he bestows on them for their omission, since he might easily have snatched the wand himself, although there seems to be no reason why he should delay to make his appearance, except that the escape of Comus gives occasion for the introduction of the most exquisite and beautiful episode in the masque. The Spirit bethinks himself of another way to rescue the Lady, who still sits

motionless in her enchanted chair. He will invoke the nymph Sabrina, whom he describes in a speech of the purest poetry, which is followed by a song of invocation of matchless beauty (ll. 859–66). Then follows an "adjuration" in octosyllabic couplets (ll. 867–89), which was at first intended to be recited, but seems to have been sung by Lawes and the two Brothers, each taking a part in succession (*Bridgewater MS.*). The remarks already made about previous lyrical portions of the masque are applicable here, and it will be noted that the main dramatic business being over, and much spectacular effect being demanded, the transition from blank verse to a succession of lyrical passages is natural and proper. The influence of *The Faithful Shepherdess* is abundantly manifest from now on. It is not likely that Milton borrowed from Peele for this scene, but he may possibly have remembered Spenser (*F. Q.*, II., xii. and III., xii.), Tasso (*Jer. Del.*, xvi.), and even Giles Fletcher (*Christ's Victory*, Part II.).

816. *Without his rod reversed.* See note to l. 48.

817. The idea of reversing his wand and muttering the spells backward seems to be borrowed from Ovid's description of the way Circe undid the enchantments she had practised on the companions of Ulysses (*Met.*, xiv., 300. *Cf. Fairy Queen*, III., xii., 36. In the means of deliverance finally employed some have seen an assertion of the necessity of obtaining assistance, not from human means, but from Divine Providence.

822. *Melibœus* (a name used in classical pastorals) is generally supposed to refer to Spenser (not Geoffrey of Monmouth, who was not a shepherd, *i.e.*, poet), who told the legend of Sabrina (*F. Q.*, II., x., 14), and for whose genius Milton had a profound admiration. The story of the nymph is also related by Geoffrey of Monmouth, Sackville, Drayton, and Warner (*Albion's England*, iii.), and by Milton himself in his *History of Britain*. Sabrina is the Severn, in the neighborhood of which the audience were assembled; the exquisite appropriateness of her introduction is therefore apparent.

823. *Soothest*, truest.

827. *Whilom*, of old. See Skeat, *s. v.*, "while."

831. Compare Shelley's poem, *Arethusa.*

832. *His*, its. See note to *Il Pens.*, l. 128.

834. *Pearlèd*, adorned with pearls (said to have been found in the Severn), a pretty but conventional epithet, as pearls were frequently used in masques to decorate ladies taking the part of nymphs, and were constantly associated with rivers in poetry. So Leconte de Lisle, describing an Indian river goddess, has "Avec ses bracelets de perle et de corail." (*Bhagavat.*)

835. *Straight* may here be used of direction as well as of time. *Cf.* l. 811. *Nereus* was a divinity of the sea, a prophet, and the father of

the Nereids ("The water-nymphs, that in the bottom played"), fifty in number. He was supposed to reside chiefly in the Aegean Sea, but Milton would have no scruples in bringing him nearer home. *Cf.* l. 871, and Horace, *Odes*, I., xv.

836. *Lank*, drooping.

838. *Lavers*, baths (vessels to lave in), into which nectar (see note to l. 479) had been poured, and in which asphodels (daffodils, or, here, rather, the famous plant of classical mythology, which Milton probably used without thinking of its association with the dead) had been strewed.

839. *Porch*, *i.e.*, the ears, eyes, etc. *Cf.* Hamlet, I., v., 63.

840. *Ambrosial*, *i.e.*, of heavenly qualities (odor, etc.). *Cf.* note to l. 16. "Ambrosial oils" is Homeric (*Iliad*, xxiii., 186).

841. *Cf.* l. 10, and see note.

845. *Helping*, *i.e.*, providing remedies against (l. 847). *Urchin*, mischievous. "Urchin" first meant the hedgehog, an object of popular fear and superstition; then it meant an imp or wicked spirit, from which we get our modern meaning, a small boy.

846. Various spirits of mischief, such as those described in *L'Allegro* (see notes to ll. 103–105) are probably here referred to. *Shrewd*, like a shrew, *i.e.*, malicious. See Skeat.

850. *Garland wreaths*, *i.e.*, wreaths of flowers, formed like garlands, to be worn on the head. The expression is not exactly tautological. The verse describes a way of showing gratitude common in pastoral poetry.

851. *Cf.* *Lycid.*, l. 144.

852. *Old swain*, *i.e.*, Melibœus; but the power to unloose spells is ascribed to Sabrina by Drayton, not by Spenser. (Warton, who quotes *Polyolbion*; Fifth Song.)

863. *Train*, *i.e.*, that which is trailed. *Amber-dropping* means that water is dripping from her yellow and fragrant hair, so that it seems as if amber were really dropping from it. Yellow or amber locks are appropriate to a river-goddess. *Cf.* "amber stream," *Paradise Lost*, iii., 359; Gray, *Progress of Poesy*, "Meander's amber waves." Sabrina's yellow locks would probably be braided with water-lilies when she appeared on the stage.

865. *Silver Lake*, *i.e.*, the Severn, perhaps, as Bell notes. Milton may have remembered that *lacus* in Virgil is used for "river;" but so is "lake" used in provincial English for stream or rivulet, and this seems to have been a M. E. use of the word.

868. *Océanus*. See note to l. 96. Of the other deities referred to we may note that Homer calls Poseidon (Neptune) "earth-shaking," with a probable allusion to the might of his waves; that Tethys was the wife of Oceanus; that the Carpathian wizard was Proteus, who dwelt

in the Carpathian Sea (between Rhodes and Crete), and was a soothsayer, changing his shape at pleasure (hence "Protean"), and shepherd of the sea-calves ("hook," see note to l. 115); that Triton was the "Herald of the Sea," and "scaly" because his lower parts were like a fish (see note to *Lycid.*, l. 89); that Glaucus was a fisherman of Bœotia, who was made a sea-god with prophetic powers, which did not save him from getting into amorous complications with Circe and Scylla (see note to l. 257); that Leucothea (the "white goddess") was Ino, daughter of Cadmus, who drove away her step-children Phryxus and Helle, and in order to escape her mad husband, Athamas, leaped into the sea with her son Melicertes, in her arms, the latter becoming the sea-god Palaemon (l. 876); that Thetis was the daughter of Nereus, and the mother of Achilles, being thus a prominent character in the *Iliad*, where she is known as the "silver-footed," an epithet that Milton has paraphrased without foreseeing the change that would come over the meaning of "tinsel;" finally, that both Parthenope and Ligea were Sirens (see note to l. 253, and Milton's *Ad Leonoram*, iii.), the "tomb" of the former being near Naples (once called Parthenope), and the "comb" of the latter (*cf.* Virgil, *Georg.*, iv., 336–7) being given her by the poet, with the probable intention of connecting her with the picturesque race of mermaids. *Cf.* Wordsworth's

"Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn,"

and Heine's *Lorelei*:

"Sie kämmt ihr goldenes Haar—

"Sie kämmt es mit goldenem Kamme
Und singt ein Lied dabei;
Das hat eine wundersame,
Gewaltige Melodei."

875. *Lovely hands.* Verity makes a neat reference to *Odys.*, v., 461–2, where this very expression is used of Leucothea.

882. *Sleeking*, making glossy. *Cf. Lycid.*, l. 99. "Sits" ought strictly to be the participle, and "sleeking" the finite verb.

885. *Rosy head.* "Head" is probably used here for "face;" if not, we have to account for "rosy," especially after our explanation of "amber-dropping." It seems to me most likely that the epithet was delicately chosen with reference to the "coral-paven" of the next line. The latter epithet need not be taken literally, nor is "paven" necessarily connected with artificial work.

890-921. Sabrina rises, attended by her nymphs, and sings a very pretty song of salutation, to which the Spirit replies in another song of invocation. Then the goddess addresses the Lady in recited octosyllabics, that describe the measures she is taking to break the spells. When her task is accomplished she hastens to descend. Neither the songs nor the recited couplets can be considered equal in beauty to the lyrical portion of the preceding scene, but they suffer only in comparison with Milton's own work. The student should notice the interlacing of rhymes.

890. *Cf. Paradise Lost*, iv., 262.

891. *Grows.* See note to *Lycid.*, l. 7. *Dank*, damp.

893. *Azurn*, azure, blue. "Azurn" and "cedarn" are peculiar to Milton, and are thought to have been formed from the Italian *azzurino* and *cedrino*, rather than by analogy with such adjectives as "oaten" (*Lycid.*, l. 33), "hornen," etc. There is logically no need for the epithet, as the next line gives us "turkis blue" (turquoise), but the poetical effect of the verse is much enhanced by it.

895. This clause is difficult of explanation. Bell very properly remarks that Milton did not intend to convey the idea that turquoises and emeralds were to be found in the Severn any more than that myrrh and cinnamon grew on its banks (l. 937). The main point to be noted in the passage is the use of "strays." The verse originally stood,

"That my rich wheel inlays,"

which was rather unnecessary after "thick set." This line probably limited the precious stones mentioned, but the substituted verse seems to be connected with "sheen," giving us the idea that the gleam of the stones (provided "azurn sheen" be not restricted to "turquoise," Milton being fond of such abstract forms of expression) is visible here and there along the channel as though it "strayed about." "Strays," being singular, need not keep us from making it agree with the stones, for it might agree with its nearest subject (see note to *Lycid.*, l. 7), but unless we conceive the stones as being washed on by the waves it is hard to justify the use of the word. If "azurn" be not stressed, we might understand the poet to mean that the chariot, which is "thick set" with the stones named, has a "sheen" similar to that which is observed upon the blue-green waters of the channel. Or, finally, he may mean that the chariot, which now "stays" by the rushy bank, is wont to "stray" up and down the channel. The cancelled verse tells against both these views, but Milton may not have intended his new verse to have exactly the same grammatical relations as the old. Editors do not, as a rule, throw

much light on the passage; but Warton shows that Milton may have had an eye to Drayton's description of Sabrina's "chair," which tells against the idea that the stream is the chariot.

898. *O'er.* Notice how much more appropriate this preposition is, when used of feet that leave no impress, than "on" would have been. *Cf.*, however, *Tempest*, V., i., 34. The idea is familiar, especially Virgil on Camilla, imitated by Pope, *Essay on Criticism*, ll. 372–73.

904. *Band* is about equivalent to "bonds" of enchantment.

913. *Of precious cure.* The phrase belongs to "drops," and means "of highly to be prized curative power." References to the efficacy of sprinkling are frequent, *e.g.*, in the English Bible, in Spenser, in Virgil (*Aen.*, vi., 230), in Ovid (*Met.*, iv., 479), in *Paradise Lost*, xi., 416.

919. *His*, its. See note to *Il Pens.*, l. 128.

921. *I.e.*, to be in attendance in the bower (see note to *L'Alleg.*, l. 87) of Amphitrite, the wife of Neptune. It is impossible not to believe that Milton had his mind or his eye on *The Faithful Shepherdess* throughout this speech. Perhaps, too, he remembered Browne's *Masque*.

922–957. Sabrina having descended, and the Lady having arisen, the Spirit, in octosyllabic couplets, invokes appropriate blessings upon the goddess, and then adjures the Lady to fly with him (and her Brothers) from the accursed place, promising to lead her to her father's hall, where there are festivities on foot in honor of the latter's arrival in his province. The first sixteen verses, which were intended to be sung, are admirably poetic in rhythm and diction. The poetry of the close is not striking, but the subject-matter of the recited verses hardly lent itself to better treatment. The closing couplet, however, one line of which is a pentameter, is excellent.

923. *Anchises' line.* Brute, Sabrina's grandfather, was lineally descended, it was held, from Anchises, the father of Aeneas.

924. *Brimmèd* (an exquisite epithet), brimming, full to the brim (the past participle often taking the place of the present among the Elizabethans). *Cf.* M. Arnold's *A Southern Night*, "Down to the brimmed, moon-charmèd main." Some take the word to mean "confined by banks" (brim, edge). It would be hard to match this verse and the three that follow, either in Milton's own work or in that of his compeers, for the charm of pure pellucid beauty. The passage is said to describe the Severn accurately, and most probably contains echoes of Fletcher and of Browne (*Brit. Past.*, I., ii., 272–92).

929. *Scorch*, an optative. *Singèd*, too (l. 928), is equivalent to "scorched," hardly to "scorching," as has been suggested, for what Milton means is that the air itself has been burned, not that it scorches other objects. The most prosaic of us say that.

935. *Round.* This adverb is usually taken with "crowned," and

"upon" is sometimes regarded as an adverb similarly used, *i.e.*, the head (or source in the mountains) is *crowned around*, and the banks are *crowned upon* (*cf.* Greek περιστεφανόω and ἐπιστεφανόω). To my own mind this is a rather stiff and mechanical explanation. I should prefer to take "round," along with "tower and terrace," as equivalent to "stretching around," "on all sides" (see note to *L'Alleg.*, l. 70), and to regard "upon" as a preposition (post-positive) with "banks" for its object. "Head" must be the grammatical subject of the second clause, but its logical subject seems to be "thou," implied in "thy." Note how picturesquely the *course* of the river is traced by the use of the expressions "lofty head," recalling its sources in the mountains, and "here and there thy banks upon," giving us the idea of forests and cleared places succeeding each other along the shores. *Cf.* note to l. 895. "Head" may, of course, be taken as applying literally to the person of the goddess by those who care to put up with a much-mixed metaphor.

942. *Waste* is practically explained by *needless.*

945. *Covert*, here thicket or wood. The idea of shelter is absent.

949. *Gratulate*, welcome.

950. *Wished.* See note to l. 574. Supply "where" after "and."

956. It has been assumed that these words were spoken outside the palace, and that between l. 939 ("cursèd place," *i.e.*, palace) and l. 945 ("covert") there is a change of scene by which the palace disappears and the original forest is again in view for a moment. But what is gained by so short a scene, or why this trouble should have been taken at an amateur entertainment, and why Milton should not have indicated it by stage directions has never been explained; nor is there any reason why the Spirit, since everybody knew that the forest stretched around, and that the night was growing old, should not speak vividly, as if the party were already on their way. The use of "thence" (in l. 946), which evidently refers to the end of the "covert," strengthens this view. Why not "hence," if they were in the forest?

958–1023. The scene now changes to "Ludlow Town and the President's Castle." Country dancers first occupy the stage, making the second anti-masque, after which the Spirit and his company enter. Two songs are then sung by this Guardian Genius, one dismissing the dancers, the other presenting the Lady and her Brothers to their father and mother, who were probably throned in state near the portion of the hall set apart for the actors. The dances seem to continue during these songs, but may be executed by a new set of performers; when both are ended, the Spirit delivers an epilogue of great beauty, closing with perhaps the highest strain of combined lyric and moral fervor to be found in the masque. The whole scene is in octosylla-

bics, with an occasional pentameter. The charge that Milton has violated the unities of time and place may be dismissed with the remark that if he has, it makes no difference whatsoever, and that it is by no means certain that the scene takes place by daylight, as has been assumed. L. 959, "Till next sunshine holiday" (*cf.* *L'Alleg.*, l. 98), may refer not to the time of the injunction, but to the time when the dances and sports began, which would be before the night came on.

960. *Be.* See note to l. 12. *Duck* and *nod* are naturally used of the awkwardness of the rural dancers. *Cf.* "jigs," l. 952 and ll. 102–144; also *L'Alleg.*, ll. 91–99. Note recessive accent of *without.*

962. *Court guise*, courtly ways (wise) or mien.

964. *Dryades*, wood nymphs; I do not know exactly why Mercury, the herald of the gods, is associated with them, except that he was a "devising" deity and the one best fitted to direct their short, dainty ("mincing") steps. *Cf.* Horace, *Odes*, I., x.

965. *Lawns.* See note to *L'Alleg.*, l. 71. *Leas*, meadows.

967. *Ye.* See note to l. 216.

968. *Goodly*, handsome, comely.

972. *Assays*, trials.

976. Lawes by slight changes made the greater portion of the epilogue available as a prologue, and probably sang it while descending on the stage. The last twelve lines then served as epilogue. Editors seem plainly right when they see in the Spirit in this part of the masque a legitimate descendant of the Ariel of *The Tempest* (*cf.* V., i., 88–94) and the Puck of *Midsummer Night's Dream.*

977. *Happy climes*, probably the Elysian plains. See note to *L'Alleg.*, l. 147.

978. See note to *Lycid.*, l. 26.

982. *Hesperus.* See note to l. 393. *Golden tree* is from Ovid (*Met.*, iv., 636.

984. *Crispèd*, curled (the foliage of the trees is curled by the winds). "Crispèd brooks" occurs in *Paradise Lost*, iv., 237.

985. *Spruce*, dainty. See Skeat.

986. *Graces.* See note to *L'Alleg.*, l. 12. *Rosy-bosomed Hours.* The Hours were the goddesses of the seasons. The epithet is Homeric, and the whole expression has been borrowed by Gray, *Ode to Spring:*

"Lo! where the rosy-bosom'd Hours."

Ll. 984–87 are wanting in the *Cambridge* and *Bridgewater MSS.*

990. *Cedarn.* See note to l. 893. Verity notes that M. Arnold uses it in *The New Sirens.*

991. *Nard and cassia's.* Both are aromatic plants; the language is scriptural.

992. *Iris.* See note to l. 83.

993. *Blow*, cause to blossom. It is usually intransitive and used of the flowers themselves (*cf. Lycid.*, l. 48).

995. *Purflèd*, having its edges embroidered. "Shew" and "hue" rhyme. *Cf. Il Pens.*, 171–2. *Cf.* ll. 511–12. Here the *Cambridge MS.* inserts a line:

"Yellow, watchet, green and blue,"

where "watchet" means a pale blue.

997. *True*, *i.e.*, attuned, able to catch the high notes. Hardly "pure," as Bell thinks.

999. *Adonis*, the beloved of Venus ("the Assyrian Queen," Astarte, Astaroth), who died gored by the tusks of a wild boar. A familiar legend, perhaps symbolic of spring and winter, since the gods at Venus's request allowed him to spend six months of each year on earth. *Cf.* Bion's *Lament for Adonis* and Shakspere's exquisite poem; also *Paradise Lost*, i., 446. The lines seem, as Warton notes, to refer to the fabulous "Gardens of Adonis." *Cf. Fairy Queen*, III., vi., 46, and *Paradise Lost*, ix., 439–40.

1000. *Waxing*, growing.

1003. *Spanglèd sheen*, glittering radiance. *Cf. Lycid.*, l. 170.

1004. *Advanced*, raised up (like a banner).

1005. *Psyche*, the human soul. In the well-known myth she betrays curiosity to know who her lover is, burns him with the oil of her lamp while she looks at him asleep, is persecuted by Venus, but at last becomes immortal, and is united to Cupid for ever. The myth is of late origin, but is very familiar in poetry. Mr. William Morris has treated it well in *The Earthly Paradise*. By "Celestial Cupid" Milton lays stress on the nobler and purer side of love, and, as Masson notes, the whole passage has a mystical and Platonic tinge.

1008. *Make.* The subject is "free consent."

1011. Another ideal genealogy. *Cf. L'Allegro.*

1012. *Now.* Supply "that." *Cf. Mid. Night's Dream*, IV., i., 102, but more especially the closing verses, recited by the Satyr (prototype of Milton's Spirit) in Fletcher's *Faithful Shepherdess.*

1015. *Bowed welkin.* Arched sky. See Skeat.

1021. *Sphery chime*, the music of the spheres, put here for the region where it is made.

1023. The essential nobility of these lines must again be pointed out. Who was fitter to pen them than Milton himself? Editors have noted that Ben Jonson's Masque, *Pleasure Reconciled to Virtue* (in which Comus is a character), ends with a song in praise of Virtue.

The concluding lines may have impressed Milton, but how superbly he has bettered them :

> "There [*i.e.*, in heaven], there is Virtue's seat,
> Strive to keep her your own :
> 'Tis only she can make you great,
> Though place here make you known."

In the album of the Neapolitan Cerdogni (then resident in Geneva), Milton, in 1639, wrote the last two lines of *Comus*, and added an adaptation of the famous Horatian line as applicable to himself as his own verses :

> "Cœlum non animum muto qui trans mare curro."

LYCIDAS

1–14. In these lines Milton states the occasion of his poem, but does not use language that necessarily indicates the kind of elegy he is about to write. The fact that he intended a pastoral elegy after the general pattern set by the Alexandrian poets does not appear, except in the name "Lycidas" itself, before the twenty-third verse. The metre, rhythm, and rhymed structure of the poem are fully exemplified in the passage. The iambic pentameter is the prevailing line, but trimeters and tetrameters are irregularly introduced throughout with exquisite effect. The rhythm is varied and flows now in leaping waves, now in long rolling billows that carry all before them, like the surging periods of *Paradise Lost*. There is probably no poem in the language the rhythm of which has been more deservedly praised and studied, or more despaired of by other poets. Milton's mastery of rhythm had been remarkable from the first, but it culminated in *Lycidas*, in spite of the fact that he was there subjected (almost for the last time) to what he afterwards called "the troublesome and modern bondage of riming." There is nothing in the unrhymed (or rhymed) portions of *Comus* that, to my ear, at all equals in majesty and splendor of rhythmical movement the passage in *Lycidas* that begins

> "Ay me! whilst thee the shores and sounding seas"—

and there is nothing in *Paradise Lost* that excels it. But it is the rhymed structure of *Lycidas* that has attracted most attention because it is almost unique. Three of its notable peculiarities may be pointed out. In the 193 verses there are 10 that have no rhyming re-

lations with others in their vicinity. There is no fixed order of rhyme, and where, as often happens, two adjacent verses rhyme, they sometimes fail to form a couplet in the strict sense of the word. There is a paucity of rhymed endings (only about 60 in the poem) which shows that one sound and its related rhymes do duty for several verses; *e.g.*, ll. 2, 5, 6, 9, 12, 14, end respectively with "sere," "year," "dear," "peer," "bier," and "tear." Other peculiarities, such as the use of assonance, might be dwelt upon, but the student may observe these for himself, for the main question that concerns us here is, How did these peculiarities originate? This question was long ago indirectly answered by Dr. Johnson, when, in the course of his famous *Life*, he casually remarked on the fact that Milton's "mixture of longer and shorter verses, according to the rules of Tuscan poetry," proved his "acquaintance with the Italian writers." Later Dr. Guest tried to show that an irregularly rhymed pastoral by Ludovick Bryskett on the death of Sidney (which made no use of verses without rhyme or of varying length) had been in Milton's mind when he wrote *Lycidas;* but that our great poet was influenced by the Italian masters, both in his arrangement of rhymes and in his alternation of shorter and longer verses, will be apparent to anyone who will take the trouble to analyze the choruses of the *Aminta* or *il Pastor Fido*, or to examine a treatise on Italian metres. Mr. Verity, by the way, notes that Landor also saw Milton's metrical obligations to Tasso and Guarini, and refers to the English critic's collected works (1876), iv., 499.

1. *Once more.* It seems proper to agree with those editors who think that these words refer to the fact that Milton had written no English verse for three years, owing to his extended studies to fit him for his high poetic function, rather than with those who hold that the poet means that he is again about to write an elegiac poem like those on the *Fair Infant*, and the *Marchioness of Winchester*. *Laurels.* The plants mentioned are associated with classical poetry rather than with elegy in particular or with mourning. The poet is going to make a wreath for himself because he is about to sing a song.

2. *Brown. Cf.* Horace, *Odes*, I., xxv., 18, "pulla . . . myrto." *Sere*, dry, withered, used several times by Shelley in *Adonais*. Perhaps, as the plants are evergreen, poets have regarded them as symbolic of an immortal art.

3. *Crude*, unripe, *i.e.*, Milton himself was not ready to write poetry in the high sense he always gave to the word. *Cf. forced*, in the next verse, also *Comus*, l. 480. See the Sonnet written on his twenty-third birthday, and compare this sentence from the letter he wrote in Latin to Diodati, September 23, 1637, not long before he wrote *Ly-*

cidas: "But what am I doing? πτεροφυῶ, I am letting my wings grow and preparing to fly; but my Pegasus has not yet feathers enough to soar aloft into the fields of air" (Fellowes' translation).

5. *Shatter*, scatter. *Mellowing year*. Supply "does." Critics have observed that "mellowing" applies rather to fruits than to leaves, and that the plants referred to shed their leaves gradually, not at any particular season; but Bell sensibly points out that the poet "is influenced by the personal application of the words, and is thinking of the poetical fruit he was himself to produce." Landor (quoted by Browne) asserts that the ivy does shed its leaves in due season, though not all of them.

6. *Dear*. There has been much discussion as to the force of this epithet. I take it to mean that while King's death is a sad occasion, still anything connected with King must be "dear" to Milton in the sense that it is near to him and of great significance. ("Dear" originally meant "precious;" for a natural change of meaning among the Elizabethans see Craik's *English of Shakspere*, pp. 205–207.) This is a good example of the separation of two epithets by the interposition of their common substantive, the second adjective qualifying the idea formed by the combination of the first adjective and the noun. See note to *L'Alleg.*, l. 40.

7. *Compels*. The singular is allowable when the two or more logical subjects are conceived as one idea. Elizabethans also liked to make a verb agree with its nearest subject. The "s" seems to my ear to give the verse a slower movement than could have been obtained with the plural "compel," which was perhaps the effect Milton wanted. It can hardly be the Northern plural in *-s*, frequent in Shakspere. *Due*, proper. See note to *Il Pens.*, l. 155.

8. *Lycidas*. The name is frequent in pastoral poetry. *Cf.* Theoc, *Idyl*, vii.; Virgil, *Ecl.*, ix. Note the effect of the repetition of "dead" and of the name of the shepherd, and compare with some of Poe's similar effects in the *Raven*, etc. *Cf. Begin*, ll. 15, 17. Editors compare Spenser's *Astrophel*, 7, 8, and Milton's *On the Death of a Fair Infant*, quoted in note to l. 106. Spenser was quite fond of this device. *Cf.* the second stanza of the Prelude to his *Astrophel*, where, as often with Poe, the repetitions are marked by slight verbal changes:

"*To you alone I sing this mournfull verse,*
The mournfulst verse that ever man heard tell:
To you whose softened hearts it may empierse
With dolour's dart for death of Astrophel.
To you I sing and to none other wight,
For well I wot my rymes bene rudely dight."

9. *Peer*, equal.

10. It is usual to compare with this rhetorical question Virgil's "neget quis carmina Gallo?" (*Ecl.*, x., 3). *Knew*. See note to *Comus*, l. 87.

11. *Build the lofty rhyme*. Editors cite the Latin phrase "condere carmen," but, as Jerram points out, this may simply mean "put together." I am inclined to think Milton had Horace's "Exegi monumentum" (*Odes*, iii., xxx.) before his mind, whence, perhaps, he derived the idea contained in his superb epithet "lofty," which refers rather to the glory of poetry than to the character of King's poems. But such suppositions must always be taken for what they are worth, and that is little. For the spelling and derivation of "rhyme" see Skeat.

13. *Welter*, roll or toss about. *To*, *i.e.*, according as the wind blows. *Parching*, according to Jerram, "describes generally the effect of exposure to weather, and is used of cold as well as heat." The passage from *Paradise Lost* (ii., 594), cited in support of this statement, is not convincing, and the *Cent. Dict.* recognizes only the usual meaning of the word connected with heat. King was drowned in August; hence, "parching" would be an appropriate epithet.

14. *Meed*, recompense, reward of merit. *Melodious tear*, a poem or melody, accompanied by tears; *i.e.*, an elegy. *Cf.* "tears of perfect moan" (*Epit. on the March. of Winchester*, l. 55). Elegists often called their poems, "lachrymæ;" but the conceit is not a particularly good one.

15-22. These lines contain an invocation to the Muses, in which the rather strenuous nature of the poet shows itself, as well as his gentler and more human side, when he expresses the hope that he himself may be favored with a similar tribute of love and song. *Begin*. The technical opening of a pastoral elegy. See Theocritus, *Idyl*, i., 64.

15. *Sacred well* (a Spenserian phrase), either the fountain of Aganippe on Mt. Helicon, where the "seat of Jove" would be the altar around which the Muses dance (Hesiod's *Theogony*, cited by Jerram and Hales. See note to *Il Pens.*, l. 46); or the Pierian fountain at the foot of Mt. Olympus, where the Muses, or "Sisters of the sacred well," were born. Here Mt. Olympus itself would be the "seat of Jove," which is more probable (Bell and Browne).

18. *Coy*, hesitating (Latin, *quietus*), now used only of persons as a rule. See Skeat.

19. *Muse*, poet; hence, the use of "he" in l. 21. A rather unusual and somewhat misleading application of the word, perhaps founded on the use of the Latin *musa* for "song" (see note to l. 66). In *Sonnet* i., 13, "Whether the Muse or Love call thee *his* mate," it is not

necessary to make "Muse" masculine in order to explain "his," which may simply refer to "Love," and give at the same time a better cæsura. Shakspere, Browne, and Dryden have been cited as using "muse" in the sense of "poet," as well as Spenser (*Prothal.*, l. 159).

20. *Destined urn*, the urn destined for me, referring to the ancient custom of depositing the ashes of the dead in urns.

22. *Sable shroud.* There seems to be no reason for taking "shroud" in any save its ordinary sense of a covering for the dead (see note to *Comus*, l. 147). Other interpretations are "dark tomb" and "the darkness in which I am shrouded." The lines suggest a comparison with Horace, *Odes*, I., xxviii.

23–36. In this paragraph (for it will be observed that the stages of the analysis correspond with the paragraphs) the pastoral nature of the elegy is definitely indicated, and Milton's own college friendship with King is fittingly described. The edition of 1645 (see the Pickering edition, vol. i., 1851, and Jerram) put ll. 23 and 24 as the closing verses of the second paragraph, and began the third with l. 25. This seems awkward, and it is better to print as in the text, or to make only one paragraph of ll. 15–36, as Bradshaw does, following, it would seem, the arrangement of 1638.

23. "The hill here is, of course, Cambridge; the joint feeding of the flocks is companionship in study; the rural ditties on the oaten flute are academic iambics and elegiacs; and old Damœtas is either Chappell, whom Milton has long forgiven, or some more kindly fellow of Christ's" (Masson, *Life* (edition of 1881), I., 656). Specimens of King's Latin verses are given by Masson (pp. 648–9). They do not come up to our notion of "lofty rhyme," but Milton intended his epithet rather as a tribute to poety itself than to King's metrical attempts. Besides, Milton may have seen English verses of King's displaying greater promise. Professor Masson is not justified in arguing from the "obstetric plainness of phrase" in some of King's pieces that he had not the "taste of a true son of the Muses." A study of the elegiac verse of the period will convince anyone that many a true poet was capable of making reference to what would now be considered indelicate subjects simply because our forefathers were not in the least squeamish or reticent.

25. *Lawns.* See note to *L'Alleg.*, l. 71.

26. An exquisite rendering of a familiar metaphor. *Cf.* note to *Il Pens.*, l. 141. Apposite citations are: *Job* iii. 9 (marginal reading), "the eyelids of the morning;" Crashaw, *Music's Duel*, "the eyelids of the blushing day;" and Middleton, *Game of Chesse* (1625), which has the very same phrase. Milton first wrote "glimmering," which was altered and improved to "opening," in 1645.

27. *Drove* may be transitive (supply "flock"), or intransitive, the

latter interpretation being the more poetical. *A-field.* For the weakening of "on" to "a," see note to *L'Alleg.*, l. 20. *Both together.* *Cf.* with l. 25, and notice the effect of the inverted repetition.

28. *What time*, etc., *i.e.*, heard the gray-fly at what time (when) "she winds her sultry horn." This makes sense and is poetical in expression. The transferrence of the object of the principal verb into the relative clause is a Latinism. To take the whole verse as the object of "heard" seems to me to give a very prosaic turn to the passage. The gray-fly appears to be the trumpet-fly, which makes a hum at noonday. *Cf.* Collins's *Ode to Evening*, ll. 11-12. As in *L'Allegro*, the poet is giving a condensed picture of a whole day divided into morning, noon, and eve—the day of a student at the universities then began very early. Milton was evidently fond of the early morning.

29. *Battening*, fattening (transitive here, though more frequently intransitive). *Dews.* Jerram very appositely cites Virgil, *Ecl.*, viii., 15 :

"Cum ros in tenera pecori gratissimus herba,"

and *Georg.*, iii., 324–26, where, practically, the same verse is repeated. This is one of the few cases in which we may feel almost certain that Milton had his eye or mind *directly* on another poet.

30. *Star*, etc. Hesperus. See note to *Comus*, l. 93. The word "rose" has been objected to on astronomical grounds, since the evening star *appears*, but does not rise, and editors have explained the verse as referring to any star; but it seems plain from Milton's *MS.* and the text of 1638, that the evening star was meant, and most readers will fail to perceive any astronomical anomaly. Spenser (*F. Q.*, III., iv., 51) elevated Hesperus in the same way, and Jerram shows that both poets had classical authority for their procedure.

31. *Westering*, moving westward. It originally stood "burnisht," the change being an improvement, and perhaps due to Chaucer or Spenser.

32. *Ditties.* See note to l. 23, and note to *Comus*, l. 86.

33. *Tempered*, attuned, modulated. Jerram quotes Gray, *Progress of Poesy :*

"Thee the voice, the dance, obey,
Tempered to thy warbled lay,"

where "warbled" will be noted as another word of which Milton was fond. *Oaten flute.* See note to *Comus*, l. 345.

34. *Satyrs*, *Fauns*, familiar representatives of light-hearted pleasures in classical mythology, here standing for the students of Cambridge,

not necessarily for the least studious ones, as has been thought. The lusty and sportive Satyrs of the Greeks were confounded by the Romans with their Fauns, who were also half-men, half-goats ("cloven-heel"). Milton was justified in introducing them into a pastoral. As we have seen, a satyr plays an important part in Fletcher's great pastoral drama, as one had previously done in the *Aminta*, where there is an exquisitely poetical description of his uncouth appearance (I., ii.). The student will recall also one of Hawthorne's greatest novels.

36. *Damœtas*, a pastoral name occurring in Theocritus (*Idyl*, vi.), Virgil (*Ecl.* iii.), and Sidney's *Arcadia*. See note to l. 23. In the *Arcadia* he does not bear an enviable character, and so Jerram thinks we may have here a slight bit of the old resentment against Chappell (the tutor who is said to have whipped Milton). But Milton was too great an artist to have introduced intentionally so discordant a note. Mr. Verity thinks that when the pastoral imagery is analyzed, it becomes ridiculous, but who analyzes when reading simply for pleasure?

37–49. In this paragraph the poet expresses his personal sense of loss, and, in imitation of the Alexandrians, describes the grief of inanimate nature at the death of one who was a universal favorite.

37. Notice the repetition of "now thou art gone," and of "thee," in l. 39. Observe also the force of "heavy," and the absolute sincerity of the verses, as well as their flawless perfection.

38. *Must* simply expresses certainty.

40. *Gadding*, straggling. *Cf.* the expression, "to gad about." *Wild thyme* has been objected to as not growing in forests, a petty point, and, after all, with different punctuation, the caves only need be "overgrown," and they need not be in the "woods."

42. *Copses*, woods of small growth; *i.e.*, containing much undergrowth. See Skeat. The whole passage is redolent of Moschus and Bion. Notice the exquisite choice of *fanning* (l. 44) to express the joy of the leaves.

45. *Canker*, *i.e.*, the canker-worm that produces a tumor (*cancer*) in the rose. *Cf.* Shakspere, *Son.* xxxv.:

"And lothsome canker lives in sweetest bud."

46. *Taint-worm*. Whether any particular worm is meant is doubtful. The "taint," a small red spider, mentioned by Sir Thomas Browne, and quoted by editors, can hardly be referred to, unless the meaning of "worm" is much stretched. The sense of the passage is obvious, however. *Weanling*, young, just weaned. *Herds* seems to indicate cattle rather than sheep.

47. *Wardrobe*. This use of the container for the thing contained is the familiar rhetorical figure metonymy; we not infrequently use

"wardrobe" (French, *garde-robe*) for "clothes;" here it stands for the colors in which the flowers are clad. Milton wrote "buttons" first. *Cf. Hamlet*, I., iii., 40.

48. *White-thorn blows*, hawthorn blossoms. For "blows" see note to *Comus*, l. 993.

49. *Such* stands for "so killing was." There may be a slight but allowable exaggeration in the use of so strong an epithet in describing the effect of the news of Lycidas's death upon his companions.

50–63. These lines, which declare the impotence even of the guardian Nymphs to save their "loved Lycidas," are imitated from the first *Idyl* of Theocritus (l. 64 *seq.*) and the tenth *Eclogue* of Virgil (ll. 9–12). The Theocritean Thyrsis begins his lament for Daphnis in these words: "*Begin, ye Muses, dear; begin the pastoral song!* Thyrsis of Etna am I, and this is the voice of Thyrsis. Where, ah! where were ye when Daphnis was languishing; ye Nymphs, where were ye? By Peneus's beautiful dells, or by dells of Pindus? for surely ye dwelt not by the great stream of the river Anapus, nor on the watch-tower of Etna, nor by the sacred water of Acis" (Translation of A. Lang). The parallel passage in Virgil runs as follows: "What groves or what glades held you, O maiden Naiades, when Gallus perished from an unworthy love. For neither did the ridges of Parnassus, nor any of Pindus, cause you delay, nor the Aonian Aganippe." Here Virgil, while cleaving, as Theocritus did not do, to classical localities, seems to blend the conceptions of Nymph and Muse, just as Milton is sometimes held to do; but the latter's indebtedness to Theocritus is plainly much greater. With his usual boldness he makes no mention of Grecian haunts, but transfers his divinities outright to those parts of Britain where the old Druidic religion seemed most at home, and near which King had met his fate. See note to *Comus*, l. 58. The use of "herself" (ll. 58, 59) induces me to think that Milton intended to follow Theocritus in keeping Nymphs and Muses distinct; but see note to l. 52.

50. Note the supreme felicity of the epithet "remorseless," the pathetic fallacy to the contrary notwithstanding.

52. *Steep*, probably the mountain Kerig-i-Druidion in Denbighshire, the reputed sepulchre of the Druids. The Druids, it will be remembered, were the minstrels as well as the priests and teachers of the Celts; hence Milton would have no hesitation in connecting them with the service of the Muses, if he meant his "Nymphs" to represent the latter. Or he may make the Druids bards of the Nymphs, because of the naturalistic features of the old Celtic religion. It should be remarked that originally "your" was represented by "the," so that we are bound to believe that Milton intended that his Druids and Nymphs should sustain some relationship to one another.

54. *Mona high.* The island of Anglesey, just off the Welsh coast, was known to the Romans as *Mona.* It was a famous haunt of Druids, for its "high" interior, thickly wooded with huge oaks ("shaggy"), rendered it a proper place for their sombre rites. Jerram notes that by Drayton's time the oaks had been felled, which indicates that Milton was drawing on literary sources of information, although Masson thinks he may have visited Diodati's residence on the Dee. "High" may, by the way, be a mere reminiscence of the Latin *alta*, frequently applied to islands. Leconte de Lisle in *Le Massacre de Mona* has a noteworthy description of the island, and of its fanatical votaries.

55. *Deva,* "the river Dee, on which stands Chester, the port from which King sailed" (Bell). The river was supposed to be a haunt of magicians ("wizard"), and was so described by Spenser and Drayton. Being the ancient boundary between England and Wales, it was supposed to bode evil to that country toward which it changed its course. *Cf.* Milton's *Vacation Exercise*, l. 98, "ancient hallowed Dee," and *Eleg. Lib.*, i., 3.

56. *Ay me.* See note to *Comus*, l. 511. *Cf.* l. 154. *Fondly.* See note to *Il Pens.*, l. 6.

57. This line, with its break or anacoluthon, has given some trouble. It seems easiest to take "had ye been there" as a half-musing repetition of the dream the poet had been indulging before he broke in with "Ay me, I fondly dream!" Then he catches himself up with the exclamatory question, "for what could that have done?" To supply "when I say," or "of," or "but why should I suppose it, for what," as editors have suggested, seems to complicate matters unnecessarily."

58. *Muse,* etc., Calliope, the muse of epic poetry, mother of Orpheus. The latter, crazed by the loss of Eurydice, offended the Thracian women who would have consoled him, and in one of their Bacchanalian "routs" met with the fate described in the poem. See note to *L'Alleg.*, l. 145. Note the repetition of "the Muse herself."

61. *Rout.* See note to *Comus*, first *Stage Directions.*

63. Notice the parallelism in "down the stream" and "down the swift Hebrus." In no other poem does Milton make such great and splendid use of every resource known to the art of the poet. Much learning has been expended on the discussion of Milton's right or wrong use of "swift" in connection with the Hebrus, the Thracian river which was supposed to roll its waves over golden sands until it reached the Aegean Sea. It seems agreed that Milton followed Virgil's "volucrem Hebrum" (*Aen.*, i., 317), which was supposed to be a corrupt reading on the authority of Servius, who remarked that the river was "quietissimus." Editors are not wanting, however, to defend the passage, and the Jesuit Catrou has been cited as affirming that the

Hebrus is "un fleuve d'une grande rapidité." It has even been held that "swift" is simply a stock epithet applied to rivers, like so many of the Homeric epithets. It would be a pity to believe this, as much of the beauty of the line depends upon the force of "swift;" but the student may decide the whole matter when he visits Thrace, provided there have been no great geological changes in the region. *Lesbian shore.* Jerram notes the common tradition that the head of Orpheus was carried to Lesbos and there buried, for which act of piety the Lesbians were made pre-eminent in song. As with Homer, however, various places laid claim to the honor of holding his remains, the people of Mount Libethrus, in Thrace, observing that the nightingales that built near his tomb were endowed with more melodious voices than any other of their kind.

It will be well to note, before leaving this paragraph, that Milton's manuscripts show many emendations, and prove that here, as elsewhere, he was the painstaking artist, never satisfied with anything short of perfection. Compare "gory scalp" and "divine head" with the final form, "gory visage," in l. 62.

64–84. In this paragraph Milton lays aside the pastoral pipe and relieves his feelings by what he calls a strain "of a higher mood," although it may be observed that his language is still somewhat pastoral. The question how far he was justified in this and another break in the elegiac structure and tone of his poem cannot be discussed here for want of space. There can be no question as to the noble beauty and truth of the passage viewed as a separate whole. It is as familiar as anything in English poetry, and has great autobiographical value apart from its importance as an authoritative deliverance upon the nature of true fame.

64. *What boots it.* What does it profit? *Cf.* "bootless," "to boot," and see Skeat. *Uncessant*, incessant, both forms being used indiscriminately. Why do we now use "*in*-cessant?"

65. *Homely.* *Cf. Comus*, l. 748. "Tend" and "shepherd's trade" serve as transition words to the higher strain; the poet is not yet quit of his rôle as elegist. *Cf.*, too, the use of the names "Amaryllis" and "Neæra." The adjectives in the line limit "shepherd's trade," *i.e.*, the making of poetry. As Bell notes, the "shepherd's trade" of ll. 113–120 is pastoral work in the Church.

66. *Meditate the thankless Muse.* *Cf. Comus*, l. 547. A literal translation of a Virgilian phrase (*Ecl.*, i., 2):

"Silvestrem tenui musam meditaris avena,"

where "musam" plainly means "song." Whether Milton meant to employ "Muse" in this sense is doubtful. If he did, "thankless" is equivalent to "that gets no thanks from others." If "Muse" is

personified, "thankless" is about equivalent to "ungrateful," which Milton, knowing the true and high delights of poetic effort, could hardly have intended. *Cf.* Cowper's well-known lines with regard to the "pleasure in poetic pains which only poets know." The first interpretation sorts better with the use of "meditate," *i.e.*, "apply one's self to," and with l. 65.

67. *Were it*, etc. Would it not be better to do as others are accustomed to do ("use"), etc.? These lines are usually understood to convey a contemptuous allusion to the then fashionable erotic poetry of men like Carew and Habington—the greater Elizabethans having all passed away by 1637, the year of Jonson's death. It is even contended (by Warton) that the Amaryllis and Neæra of the next lines are not merely the shepherdesses familiar to pastoral poetry (see Virgil's *Ecls.* i. and iii.), but are taken from two Latin poems of George Buchanan, for whose work Milton had a partiality. Certain quoted lines, especially with reference to the "tangles of Neæra's hair," help this supposition out, but there are also facts that militate against it, *e.g.*, that Buchanan's Amaryllis was the city of Paris! Yet is it absolutely necessary to assume that Milton is aiming his shafts at brother poets of a lower order? He has intimated in l. 65 that the "shepherd's trade" with no qualification as to kind or character, for "with uncessant care" refers to his own labors, now meets with no reward of popular favor, so that it is no wonder that King was not saved by Nymphs and Muses. If poetry in general is at a low ebb, if Church and State are in a chaotic condition, would it not be better to give up all commerce with the Muse, all dreams of true fame, and become a sensualist in very fact, like the loose Cavaliers, who seem on every hand, in all literalness, "To sport with Amaryllis in the shade, Or with the tangles of Neæra's hair?" Such a question, put by the pure, chaste Milton to himself, and answered by himself in the superb vindication of Fame is, it seems to me, more effective than the question whether he shall write amatory poetry. And, unless ll. 67–69 bear this meaning, it would be hard to prove that he is aiming his satire at the amatory poets rather than at the sensual Cavaliers in general. Besides, were the amatory poets sufficiently in evidence at this precise juncture to draw Milton's scorn, and would he have deigned to expend it on them if they had been? That amatory poets did sing of their Amaryllis or Neæra is of course true, and the lines may certainly bear the usual interpretation; but Milton would naturally have used these fictitious names in order to keep up the tone of his poem, even if he had intended the more serious meaning I have suggested. Milton's Palinode to his Latin Elegies has been held to be a renouncement of "a softer," and, it would seem, very shadowy passion.

69. *Tangles.* The most felicitous quotation that editors have brought to bear on this line is from Lovelace's *To Althea*,

"When I lie tangled in her hair."

In this verse "Or" originally stood "hid," from which circumstance both Warton and Jerram have argued that the probability of an intended reference to Buchanan is strengthened. I should say not. There was confusion introduced by the first reading, but the sensual abandonment of the lines was intensified. Warton's quotations from Buchanan, however, afford no hint of the idea implied in "hid," nor does "sporting" with the "tangles" hint at the chains or "*vincula*" of the Scotch poet.

70. *Clear*, is probably used for "noble, pure (*clarus*)." Jerram suggests "lofty" or "erected." *Cf. Paradise Regained,* iii., 24 *seq.* The idea that Fame spurs noble souls on is of course a common one, and capable of considerable illustration. The following verse, which is rather in apposition with "love of Fame" than with "Fame" itself, contains an idea found in Tacitus (*Hist.*, iv., 6).

73. *Guerdon*, reward ; in prose it should come inside the dependent clause.

74. Supply "when we" before "think."

75. *Fury* (see note to *Comus*, l. 641) is here put for Atropos, one of the three Parcæ or Fates, who presided over birth, life, and death. Clotho held the distaff, Lachesis spun the threads of life, and Atropos clipped them with "the abhorrèd shears." The phrase *blind Fury* is used intentionally, and with great effect, to voice the poet's impotent despair at the eternal contradiction expressed in the proverb *Ars longa, vita brevis*, as well as his grief at the untimely and apparently inexplicable cutting off of Lycidas in his youth ("thin-spun"). It is possible that those editors are right who hold that Milton was thinking of Destiny and her shears (Shakspere, *K. J.*, IV., ii., 91), rather than of Atropos, but the view taken here appears to be at once more natural and poetical. "Blind Fury" is a Spenserian expression (*Ruins of Rome*, xxiv.).

76. Note the zeugma, "life" and "praise" being joined to "slits," which is properly applicable to "life" only, but suggests a verb like "intercept" applicable to "praise."

77. *Touched my trembling ears.* Bell quotes with approbation Masson's "acute" note to the effect that we have here "a fine poetical appropriation of the popular superstition that the tingling of a person's ears is a sign that people are talking of him." In other words, Milton sees that what he has been saying about poetic fame is appli-

cable to himself and may set people talking. Jerram quotes Conington's remark on Virgil, *Ecl.* vi., 3:

> "Cum canerem reges et proelia, Cynthius aurem
> Vellit, et admonuit,"

to the effect that touching the ear was a symbolical act, the ear being the seat of memory. Taking this view, "trembling" is more simply explained as indicating the poet's reverence and awe at finding himself in the presence of the God of Song. Milton could hardly have had the buzz of popular talk present to his mind at such a moment, and Professor Masson's interpretation appears to me to be too "acute."

79. *Glistering.* See note to *Comus*, first *Stage Directions*. *Foil*, a leaf (Latin, *folium*) or thin sheet of metal placed under a jewel to increase its lustre. The word is often applied by poets in senses both concrete and the reverse. Here the question has arisen whether "set off to the world" (l. 80) limits "Fame" or "foil," *i.e.*, are we to understand that Fame does not need to be set off to the world in a glittering foil (Fame being first a "plant" and then a gem); or are we to take it that Fame is not a plant to grow "on mortal soil," or to be based on the glittering show of men's actions, which to the world seems to constitute true glory ("foil set off to the world"), or to be based on ("lies in") wide reputation ("broad rumor"). The latter interpretation, which is Jerram's, seems preferable, on the whole, for the metaphor becomes less mixed, and we do not have to supply "is" before "set off," nor to account for the use of the definite article before "foil." The metaphor is somewhat broken by the use of "lies," which has two dependent phrases, according to the interpretation accepted above, but is probably taken up again in "lives and spreads."

81. *By*, like many Elizabethan uses of prepositions, is not easily susceptible of explanation. Some make it equivalent to "near," "in presence of;" others to "by means of." The latter interpretation seems to accord better with the verses that follow. *Pure eyes. Cf. Habakkuk* i. 13: "Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity."

82. *Witness.* Bell paraphrases "searching and infallible discrimination," which leaves it slightly doubtful whether "witness" expands the idea contained in "pure eyes" or that in "all-judging." If it means "witnessing," it goes along with "eyes;" if it is equivalent to "judgment," "decision" (an anomalous use), it goes with "all-judging."

83. *Lastly*, finally, decisively.

84. *Meed.* See note to l. 14.

85–102. Dropping his higher "strain," Milton pays tribute to two streams noted through their connection with pastoral song; then he represents his pipe as "listening" to Triton's inquiries with regard to the causes of King's death, addressed in Neptune's behalf to the subordinate divinities of the sea.

85. *Arethuse.* The fountain of Arethusa lay in the island of Ortygia, near Syracuse. The classical myth, which was made the subject of a beautiful poem by Shelley, ran that Arethusa was a nymph of Elis, who attracted the love of the river-god Alpheus by bathing in his stream. She fled him over hill and dale, and was changed by her mistress, Diana, into a fountain; which did not mend matters, for the amorous god mingled his waters with hers. Then Diana opened a passage under the sea and the fountain of Arethusa rose in Ortygia; the Alpheus followed, and the story went that whatever was thrown into the river in Elis would rise in the Sicilian fountain. Theocritus mentions Arethusa (i., 117) and Moschus affirms that Bion drank of her waters (l. 78); hence Milton's apostrophe is appropriate in a pastoral elegy. *Cf. Arcades*, ll. 29–31.

86. *Mincius*, a river which falls into the Po near Mantua, where Virgil was born. The appropriateness of its insertion in the apostrophe, and of the epithets applied to it, will, of course, be apparent, especially when Virgil's reference to it in the *Georgics* (iii., 14–15) is recalled:

> "Propter aquam, tardis ingens ubi flexibus errat
> Mincius, et tenera prætexit arundine ripas."

The reeds are called *vocal*, not merely because pipes were made from them, but also because on them Virgil may be imagined to have accompanied his pastoral songs. Perhaps the epithet may refer to the sound of the wind blowing through them.

87. *Mood.* Jerram properly notes that this is not our word denoting a state of mind (O. E., *mōd*), but a variant of "mode" (Latin, *modus*), meaning "manner," here a particular style of music, as in *Paradise Lost*, i., 549–51:

> "Anon they move
> In perfect phalanx to the Dorian mood
> Of flutes and soft recorders."

Cf. the grammatical use of the word, and see note to *L'Alleg.*, l. 136.

88. *Oat. Cf.* l. 33, and see note to *Comus*, l. 345.

89. *Listens.* Strictly speaking, it is of course the poet himself that listens. *Herald*, etc., Triton. See note to *Comus*, l. 868. He was wont to blow on the *concha* or spiral shell (Wordsworth's "wreathèd horn") in order to still the waves. He is here introduced either to hold a

kind of court of inquiry for Neptune ("Neptune's plea" may be compared, as by Keightley, with the "Court of Common Pleas"), with regard to the matter of Lycidas's drowning; or to present Neptune's "plea," or excuse, and to make it effective by endeavors to lay the blame on inferior divinities. Browne and Masson seem to follow Keightley. Warton, Bell, and Jerram take the second view presented above. The interests of poetry are best subserved by the first view, those of philology by the second, for "plea" generally signifies a statement made by a defendant in a cause.

91. *Felon.* The use of this epithet favors the view that Triton was holding a court.

92. The verse is in *oratio recta.*

93. *Gust*, etc., every sudden tempestuous ("of rugged wings") blast. *Cf.* the well-known phrase, "on the wings of the wind."

94. *Beakèd.* Note the force of the epithet, and compare with Bell's prose rendering, "each pointed cape," which is intolerably flat. "Each jutting headland" is a nearer paraphrase, but nothing but "beakèd" will satisfy us.

96. *Hippotadès*, the Greek patronymic of Aeolus, god of the winds, who is better known by his Latin name, made familiar through the famous passage in the first book of the *Aeneid.* The story of his giving Ulysses all adverse winds tied up in a bag is found in the tenth *Odyssey. Sage* appears to have only its general meaning—wise, experienced.

97. *His* may refer to Hippotades as keeper of the "dungeon" (*cf.* Virgil, *vasto-antro*), or to "blast," which may be personified; or may simply be equivalent to "its," in which case it also refers to "blast." See note to *Il Pens.*, l. 128).

98. *Level brine. Cf.* with the "flat sea" of *Comus*, l. 375.

99. *Panopè*, one of the daughters of Nereus. See note to *Comus*, l. 835. Her name, indicating "a wide view," is, as Jerram and Palgrave remark, significant here, for it shows her to be a good witness. With *sleek*, *cf.* "sleeking," *Comus*, l. 882, and see note.

100. *It was*, etc. Is this part of the answer of "sage Hippotades" depending on "brings?" or are we to supply "he said" and imagine the poet as reporting the answer to Lycidas? or is it the poet's own explanation? It will be noted that in l. 95 Lycidas is referred to by "his;" in l. 102 by "thine." If it is thought that Hippotades supplies the answer, it is best to mark the evident intention of the poet to convey that answer to Lycidas by supplying another verb than "brings," in order not to confuse the two portions of the reply. If the poet interrupts with his own explanation, his sincerity will be all the more apparent on account of his abruptness. *Fatal* may mean "fated," "doomed;" but its use with "perfid-

ious," that is, "treacherous *to thee*," probably indicates that it simply means "fatal, or fraught with doom *to thee*." It should be remembered that King's ship did not go down in a storm, but because it was in bad condition (*cf*. ll. 98-99). This at any rate was Milton's idea of the matter; but Mr. Verity quotes from a poem by Henry King, Edward's brother, in the *Lycidas* volume, which declares that the vessel was lost in a storm. He should have known the facts, but perhaps he thought that poetical propriety required a storm. The discrepancy is curious but unimportant.

101. *Built in the eclipse*, a plain reference to the well-known superstition that nothing done during an eclipse, whether of sun or moon, could prosper. *Cf*. the noble passage in *Paradise Lost* (i., 594-99). *Rigged*, etc. The first half of this verse is imaginative, the second highly so. It is impossible to realize visually a ship "rigged out with curses," if "with" mean "by means of," unless one is endowed with the genius of a Blake. The indefiniteness attaching to this interpretation is better, however, than the concreteness of the explanation that "with" signifies "in the midst of," and that evil spirits cursed the ship while it was being fitted out.

102. *Sacred*. Note the sincerity and beauty of the epithet if it be not taken in the sense of "doomed" or "devoted to death," which is possible.

103-107. Milton's "oat" next "proceeds" to listen to the genius of the River Cam ("Camus"), who appropriately represents Cambridge among the mourners. Although the poet, like Dryden, had no great fondness for the university of which he is the greatest ornament, he could not well show his true feelings here. The phrase "reverend Sire," which may refer to the antiquity of the place or be merely a proper form of words to use of a river-god, is not, however, surcharged with affection; and but for the descriptive beauty of some of its lines the whole passage might readily be pointed out as that portion of *Lycidas* that we could most easily spare. It may be merely a fancy, but it seems to me that the comparative feebleness of verse 107 is clear proof that Milton's heart was not in his work when he wrote these lines. Jerram compares Spenser's *Pastorall Aeglogue*, in which rivers appear as mourners, and Verity, Phineas Fletcher's *Sicelides*, in which Camus speaks the prologue.

103. *Went footing slow*. Hales and Bell properly note that "went" is not here the past tense of "go," for Comus was *coming* on, but is equivalent to "wended his way." We should say in prose, "footing *it* slowly." *Cf*. the "trip it" of *L'Alleg*., l. 33.

104. *Mantle hairy* is said to refer to a hairy river-weed that floats in the Cam. *Bonnet sedge* means that the god's "cap" is formed of the coarse grass growing along the sides of the river.

105. *Inwrought with figures dim*, a decided improvement over the original "scrawled o'er." The reference seems to be to certain markings said to be seen on sedge leaves when they are dried. These markings, according to one commentator, appear on the edges of the leaves, but Milton seems to distinguish between the "figures dim" worked into the sedge and the hyacinth-like inscriptions on the edges. Perhaps one portion of the description is due to observation, the other to the poet's imagination entirely. Some editors believe that Milton was referring to the "dim" traditions and antiquities of Cambridge.

106. *Sanguine flower*, the bloody flower, *i.e.*, the hyacinth, said to have sprung from the blood of the Spartan youth Hyacinthus, who, being loved by Apollo and Zephyrus (*cf. L'Alleg.*, l. 19), and preferring the former, was killed by a quoit thrown by the god and turned aside from its proper mark by the jealous wind. *Cf.* Milton's lines in his poem *On the Death of a Fair Infant:*

> "For so Apollo, with unweeting hand,
> Whilom did slay his dearly-lovèd mate,
> Young Hyacinth, born on Eurotas' strand,
> Young Hyacinth, the pride of Spartan land."

The hyacinth was marked on its petals in such a way as to suggest to some the words αἰ, αἰ (alas! alas!), or Ὑ, the initial letter of the youth's name. Note the change of meaning in "sanguine."

107. *Reft*, participle of "reave," to take away by violence. We now use "be-reave," in a milder sense. *Pledge*, here child, offspring, because these were often used as pledges or hostages. For *quoth he*, said he (sometimes, says he), see Skeat.

108–131. In this passage, the most highly wrought and sustained of the poem, with a single exception, St. Peter is introduced as mourning over the loss of so promising a youth as Lycidas to the ministry of the Church. We have here another strain "of a higher mood," but it will be noted that Milton is very careful to use language that will be suited both to the subject of the passage and to his pastoral elegy. This he is enabled to do because the work of the Church can be well described in pastoral terms. As to how far Milton was justified in his bold introduction of St. Peter and his departure from the elegiac canon of pensive melancholy, it would be idle to argue in the short space of a note. That the verses are unrivalled for intensity of scorn and denunciation will be apparent even to the most casual reader; to the careful student they will appear more dramatic and more terrible at every reading.

108. *And last did go.* Note the effect of poetical expansion in enabling the mind to rest upon an idea and fully take it in—an effect

frequently aimed at and obtained in popular poetry. There is no actual necessity for telling us that St. Peter was the last to go, for he is represented as the last figure in a moving procession.

109. *Pilot.* Probably "steersman," as St. Peter had been a fisherman on the Sea of Galilee, and may have steered his own ship (Jerram). The choice of St. Peter to represent the Church was a fitting one, in view of Christian tradition, and of certain well-known scriptural texts. Tennyson, of course, refers to Christ when he says, in *Crossing the Bar :*

> "I hope to see my Pilot face to face
> When I have crossed the bar."

110. *Keys, i.e.*, of heaven, to close and to open, as described in the poem. The number of keys assigned the Saint is not scriptural (*cf. Matt.* xvi. 19) but traditional. The metals designated seem to be due to Milton himself. *Cf. Comus*, l. 13; Dante, *Purg.*, ix., 118. *Twain* was originally the masculine of *two*, but poets seem to use the forms indifferently. See Skeat. *Massy.* See note to *Il Pens.*, l. 158.

111. *Amain*, with power or force. *A* is the weakened "on" (see note to *L'Alleg.*, l. 20). *Main*, force, strength. For its distinction from the adjective "main," see Skeat.

112. *Mitred, i.e.*, crowned with the mitre, a sign of the Saint's episcopal authority as a bishop of the Church. Jerram seems right in contending that no special theological arguments can be based on this word or this passage. Milton was making no concessions to the Churches of Rome or England, nor was he defining his views as later; he was simply expressing his scorn of the low state of the Church and writing magnificent poetry. *Stern bespake*, sternly spoke out. In what sense is "bespeak" now used?

114. *Enow*, a considerable number. It is really a plural of *enough*. *Cf. Comus*, l. 780. From this line to l. 119 the Saint pours out his scorn on the covetous and sensual portion of the clergy; in other words, Milton comes out plainly with the Puritan principles, implicit enough in *Il Penseroso* and *Comus*. *Cf. Sonnet* xvi.

115. Notice the cumulative effect of the three verbs. There is no reference to technical questions of ordination, but to the different ways the clergy show their greed.

117. *How to scramble*, explains the "care" of which they do make reckoning, *i.e.*, to get rich preferments, from which they shove away conscientious clergymen. Similar expostulations against the greed of the established clergy had been made in England for centuries; by Langland in *Piers Plowman*, by Chaucer, in his humane and humorous way, by Spenser (*Eclogue* v., which uses pastoral language,

but with far less effect than here), and of course by religious controversialists. *Shearer's feast*, Church endowments, which he here allows, but afterwards would have substituted by voluntary contributions.

119. *Blind mouths*, *i.e.*, men who are all mouth and no eyes; blind gluttons, an invective of supreme scorn. There is classical authority for such an expression, and even for the use of such a verb as "hold," which literally could apply only to the hands of the "hirelings." From this line to l. 127 the ignorance and incompetence of the established clergy as teachers and preachers is accentuated, and the consequences to their flocks are pointed out.

120. *The least* should probably be taken with "aught," rather than with "belongs."

121. *Herdman's*. Milton's MS. has "heardsman's," *i.e.*, one who tends sheep or cattle; here equivalent to "shepherd's," the word not having been restricted in meaning. "Herdsman" occurs in *Paradise Lost*, ix., 1108.

122. *Recks*. See note to *Comus*, l. 404. *Are sped*, *i.e.*, have succeeded; are provided with the rich livings they coveted. *Cf. God-speed.* See Skeat.

123. *List*, please. This verb was generally impersonal. See note to *Comus*, l. 49. *Lean and flashy songs Grate*, etc. *Flashy*, insipid, vapid. It is not our "flashy" (showy), but the derivation is uncertain. See *Cent. Dict.* The reference here is to the unsubstantial and vapid character of the preaching of the unlearned clergy. Jerram notes the confusion involved in representing the proper business of the clergy in terms of what in pastoral poetry, as well as in actual life, is recreation merely. The force of the verses is hardly affected, however; nor need we much care when we find that Milton's subsequent views on the subject were much modified in favor of a less formally trained clergy.

124. *Scrannel* seems, in the dialect of Lancashire, to mean "thin," "lean." Milton may have picked it up in some way and been struck with its expressiveness. The whole verse is seemingly based on a line in Virgil (*Ecl.* iii., 27),

"Stridenti miserum stipula disperdere carmen."

126. If *wind* and *rank* (foul) *mist* refer, as they seem to do, to the false teaching the congregations ("hungry sheep") get, the confusion of thought noted above becomes greater; for obviously "wind" and "mist" are independent of shepherds piping well or ill. But one must not push such criticism too far. *Draw*, inhale.

127. *Rot*, etc., *i.e.*, become themselves unsound in doctrine and unsettle and contaminate the faith of others.

128. *Grim wolf*, probably the Church of Rome, reference being made to the numerous perversions to that Church which characterized the period at which *Lycidas* was written. That Archbishop Laud was referred to seems to be disproved by the expression "privy (secret) paw," for Laud was open enough in his actions and intentions. "Wolf" was suggested by both scriptural and pastoral usage. *Cf.* *Paradise Lost*, iv., 183–93; xii., 507 *seq.*

129. *Apace*, rapidly. See note to l. 111. *And nothing said.* Supply "is" or "being." The reference can hardly be even here to Laud in particular, as his opposition to the Papacy was well known at Rome. Perhaps Milton points at connivance on the part of the court at the perversions to Rome. Warton's idea that the clergy who did not *say* a full service, with "sermons three hours long," are referred to, seems utterly untenable.

130. *That two-handed engine.* It is best to leave this dread instrument of retribution shrouded in the obscurity with which the poet intentionally surrounded it. We know that in 1637 it did stand "at the door," and that it did smite once; and we hope that it smote or will smite "no more." An instrument ("engine," something made with ingenuity; see Skeat), of which we are told only that it is "two-handed" (*i.e.*, requires two hands to wield it), and that it smites, may be the scriptural "axe" that "is laid to the root of the tree," or, granting Milton to have been prophet as well as poet, the axe that beheaded Laud in 1645, or the "two-edged sword" of *Revelation*, or the sword of Justice, or the Old and New Testaments, or the two houses of Parliament, or the civil and ecclesiastical powers, or the scythe of Death, or the two-handed sword of the romances of chivalry—or anything that ingenious commentators may fancy and careful editors, like Bell, collect. If the student insist on a concrete interpretation, he may content himself with the scriptural axe. The boldness of the whole passage, and especially of the prophecy, has been often commented on, as well as the fact that the poet escaped censure and punishment. In the Cambridge edition Milton called no special attention to what must have been to him the most important and momentous portion of his poem, but in the prose "Argument" affixed to the edition of 1645, he was explicit in his reference.

132–164. The "dread voice" being past, the poet resumes the pastoral strain by invoking the "Sicilian Muse" to return and call upon inanimate nature to mourn the fate of Lycidas. There is nothing more tender or more exquisite in English poetry than the passage included between ll. 132–51. Then follows the most magnificent and imaginative strain of pure poetry that the elegy contains (ll. 152–64), poetry that makes no appeal to the "historic estimate," but produces its effect simply because in it a sublime imagination has evolved

itself in "the grand style." To paraphrase, or even analyze, such a strain would be as impertinent as it is unnecessary. It may, however, be well to recall the words of the late Walter Pater in his essay on *Style*: "To find in the poem, amid the flowers, the allusions, the mixed perspectives, of *Lycidas* for instance, the thought, the logical structure:—how wholesome, how delightful!"

132. *Alphéus*, a river of the Peloponnesus; see note to l. 85. Probably, as Jerram suggests, the mention of Arethusa in l. 85 led to the apostrophe to her lover here. Then, too, with Moschus naturally in his mind, Milton might have recalled the beautiful seventh *Idyl* of the latter, which is devoted to the river's love for the fountain. Guarini, too, had made the Alpheus speak the prologue of *il Pastor Fido*. There is a bold flight of the imagination in the poet's describing his temporary abandonment of the pastoral strain by means of the scriptural figure involved in the phrase "shrunk thy streams." There may be also, as has been noted by Jerram, an intention to illustrate the superiority of Christianity over Paganism.

133. *Sicilian Muse*, *i.e.*, the muse of pastoral poetry, although the reference is more directly to the muse of the Sicilian Theocritus to whom Bion and Moschus pay similar tribute. *Cf.* the refrain of the latter's elegy on the former:

"Begin, ye Sicilian Muses, begin the strain."

134. *Hither*, either the "laureate herse" of l. 151, supposed to be present, or the spot where it stands. See note to l. 141. *Cf.* l. 139.

136. *Use*, have their haunts or abodes (obsolete in this sense). *Cf.* the Italian *usare* in a similar sense (*Aminta*, II., ii.).

137. *Wanton.* See note to *L'Alleg.*, l. 27. The phrases in this line are of course to be taken in connection with "whispers."

138. *Lap.* *Cf.* Gray's "lap of earth;" here it is the lap of the "valleys low" on which the "swart (blackening) star," *i.e.*, the Dog Star, "sparely looks," *i.e.*, has little influence. *Swart* refers to the blackening effect of the heat of the dog-days on the vegetation of the valleys. Browne thinks it may mean "injurious," as *niger* sometimes does in Latin. The Romans believed that the star Sirius or Canicula, in the mouth of the constellation Canis, caused the great heat of this period; hence the name. *Looks* may bear an astrological meaning, as Warton suggested. Milton may have remembered Horace on the Bandusian Fountain, *Odes*, III., xiii., 9–10:

"Te flagrantis atrox hora Caniculæ
Nescit tangere."

139. *Eyes*, flowers in general; perhaps the reference is to buds that look like "eyes." *Cf.* "bells" in l. 135. *Quaint-enamelled.* "Quaint"

seems hardly to be used in its sense of "neat," as Bell thinks, but rather in its sense of "curious," referring to the remarkable character of nature's work as exhibited in the "enamel" or coloring of the flowers, which is compared to painting on a glass-like coating. See Skeat for both words.

140. *Honeyed*, sweet. This adjective, like others used by Milton, is formed like a participle from a verb that does not exist.

141. *Purple.* Is this an imperative like "throw," or is it the present indicative plural like "suck?" The latter interpretation can hardly be accepted, for it forces us to ask why Milton added the phrase "with vernal flowers," if "eyes" be equivalent to flowers. "Quaint-enamelled flowers that on the green turf suck the honeyed showers, and that purple all the ground with vernal flowers," sounds rather queerly. If "purple" be an imperative, this difficulty disappears, for "flowers" is no longer the subject of the verb, and we have the pretty idea of the ground around the "herse" of Lycidas being, even in autumn, made purple with the flowers of spring. In this case the "hither" of ll. 134, 139, will be equivalent to the spot or ground where the "herse" is supposed to stand. It may be noted that the lines that follow do not interfere with the second interpretation, for "to strew," whether it be used of all the flowers enumerated or only of those mentioned in ll. 149–150, might refer to the plucking of growing flowers. Indeed, it is hard to see how the "daffadillies" of l. 150 can be bidden to fill their cups with tears," unless they are growing; and the idea of "growing" can be definitely obtained only by viewing "purple" as an imperative. "Purple" is not employed here in a strict sense, but rather like the Latin *purpureus*, for any bright color. Spenser speaks of the morrow's "purple hayre" *F. Q.*, V., x., 16 (quoted by Jerram). *Cf. Paradise Lost,* iii., 364.

142. *Rathe*, early. *Cf. rather.* See Skeat. *Forsaken*, *i.e.*, by the sunlight. Milton first wrote "unwedded," with a possible remembrance of Shakspere (*W. T.*, IV., iv., 122–25), and followed it by a rather feeble line. Warton found "rathe and timely primrose" in *England's Helicon*, a celebrated Elizabethan miscellany. *Cf. Fair Infant*, l. 2, and M. Arnold's (*Thyrsis*, l. 120):

"Primroses, orphans of the flowery prime."

It is interesting to note that the manuscripts show that the poet labored most assiduously over this passage, and that every change was for the better, in spite of Mr. Ruskin's characterization of verse 146, "The musk-rose and the well-attired woodbine," as showing vulgar fancy. The "well-attired woodbine" took the place of "the garish

Columbine," and the epithet is exquisitely appropriate because of its very familiarity. The poet compliments the household flower as he would his daughter decked out for a pleasure party. Whether Milton imitated any special poet in the catalogue of flowers that he gives us is very doubtful. Such catalogues are not rare or hard to make, and it is only the fancy of editors that has made them see any intentional resemblance to the list given in Spenser's fourth *Eclogue*.

143. *Tufted crow-toe*, the crow-foot. The epithet describes the plant when in flower. See note to *L'Alleg.*, l. 78.

144. *Freaked*, spotted, freckled. The pansy is the flower of thought. (Fr., *pensée.*) *Cf. Hamlet*, IV., v., 177, and *Comus*, l. 851. Mr. Ruskin does not like the epithet, but Milton was thinking of *jet*, which meant for him that the flower carried mourning in its heart.

145. *Glowing*. Mr. Ruskin is certainly right in seeing imagination in this verse.

146. *Well attired woodbine*, *i.e.*, the honeysuckle (?) with a comely *head-dress* of flowers (Bell). Perhaps the epithet is used without reference to any special sort of attire.

147. *Pensive*. This epithet again enables Mr. Ruskin to declare the presence of imagination.

148. *Sad embroidery* stood first in the form, "sorrow's livery," *i.e.*, the colors appropriate to mourning. *Cf. Il Pens.*, l. 43; *Comus*, l. 189.

149. *Amaranthus*. The plant gets its name from ἀμάραντος, "unfading." *Cf. Paradise Lost*, iii., 352. *His*, its. See note to *Il Pens.*, l. 128.

150. *Daffadillies*, daffodils (asphodels). *Tears*, *i.e.*, dew. It seems improbable that Milton attached any esoteric meaning to his choice of the individual flowers that form his catalogue. He seems merely to have desired to gather together, regardless of season or special significance, a representative group of beautiful and probably favorite flowers.

151. *To strew*. It seems better to connect this infinitive with the amaranthus and the daffadillies rather than with the whole of the preceding passage. *Laureate herse*. Jerram appropriately quotes from Stanley's *Memorials of Westminster Abbey*: "The *herse* was a platform, decorated with black hangings, and containing an effigy of the deceased. Laudatory verses ["laureate"] were attached to it with pins, wax, or paste." This is a better explanation of "laureate" than to point out the fact that King was a poet, or that he had taken an academic degree. See Skeat, *s. v. hearse*, for interesting changes of meaning. *Lycid*. Similar abbreviations are frequent in our poetry. So Browne has "Celand" for "Celandine" (*Brit. Past.* I., i., 284).

152. The idea is that "to interpose a little ease" the poet has already been dallying "with false surmise" (*i.e.*, trifling with deceptive fancies) in imagining that the corpse of Lycidas is before him ready to be strewn with flowers. Waking up to this fact, he asks his reader to share this "surmise" with him ("let our," etc., but the "surmise" has *already* been "dallied with"), then is irresistibly drawn away from his pretty fancies to an imaginative attempt to realize what is actually happening to the body of his friend.

154. *Ay me!* See note to *Comus*, l. 511. *Cf.* l. 56. *Shores* was substituted for "floods," and is therefore used deliberately. The idea conveyed to my own mind is that Milton conceives the "washing" of Lycidas's body to be effected by the joint agency of the "shores and sounding seas," *i.e.*, the corpse is dashed against the shore by the waves, repelled thence, and dashed elsewhere, the process being repeated until the open sea is reached at one end of Britain or the other. I notice that Verity appears to take this view. *Whilst* in this verse seems to require the insertion before it of some expression like "shall we indulge such fancies?" or rather the idea involved in such an expression, which should not be definitely formulated in the mind.

156. *Hebrides*, the Western Isles, stretching along the west coast of Scotland.

157. *Whelming*, submerging, overwhelming. It originally stood "humming"—the change being a marked improvement.

158. *Monstrous* refers to the unknown and terrible inhabitants of the depths of the sea.

159. *Whether*, here, contrary to what we should expect from l. 156, introduces a complete sentence. *Moist vows*, vows accompanied by tears, in allusion to the ancient custom of promising a god some gift in case he answered a prayer favorably. Milton may possibly have taken his idea from Horace's famous "Quis multa gracilis" (*Odes*, I., v.), which he translated. The ode closes—

"Me tabula sacer
Votiva paries indicat *uvida*
Suspendisse potenti
Vestimenta maris deo."

The two italicized adjectives belong to different nouns, but may have suggested Milton's very phrase.

160. *Fable of Bellerus*, the fabled abode of Bellerus. The name seems to have been coined by Milton from Bellerium, the Roman designation of Land's End in Cornwall, and to be taken as typical of the old Cornish giants. The giant Corineus, who is reputed to have

come to Britain with Brute, and to whom Milton refers in his *History of Britain*, stood in the manuscript originally, but the name was rather unrhythmical and was dropped. It is barely possible that Milton may have intended his line to mean, "Sleepest near the spot whence the fable of Bellerus old takes its origin."

161. *Great Vision*, etc., refers to the fabulous apparitions of St. Michael in his chair (a crag so named) on the mountain near Land's End called by his name. The Archangel was supposed to "guard" the mount.

162. *Namancos and Bayona* are both places in the Spanish province Galicia, near Cape Finisterre. *Hold*, castle, stronghold. St. Michael is supposed to get a clear sea view in the direction of these two towns, which being obscure long puzzled the commentators as to their whereabouts, Todd first discovering them in editions of *Mercator's Atlas* of 1623 and 1636. Mr. Verity has a long and interesting note showing how Milton probably got his two names from one of these editions; but he was so widely read that he might not have needed to hunt out names to fit his verses.

163. *Angel*. This word and verse have given rise to much discussion. Some editors maintain that the Angel is St. Michael, who is implored to cease looking toward Spain and to cast his eyes upon the seas near at hand—probably that he may discover the body of Lycidas. Others claim that Lycidas himself is the Angel, who is to look homeward and melt with compassion ("ruth") for his sorrowing friends, while dolphins are prayed to waft the youth's body. I cannot agree with Bell that l. 164 prevents the acceptance of the latter view, for I have just shown how it may be plausibly interpreted; but I am not convinced by Jerram's long argument that Lycidas really is the Angel. The latter editor thoroughly disposes of Warton's objection to the expression "melt with ruth," and strengthens his case by citing some lines from Sannazaro's first *Eclogue*, which strikingly resemble Milton's verses, and lend themselves to the second interpretation only. But although Jerram is sure Milton had these lines in his mind, there is no proof that he really had, and unfortunately the main argument on which the learned editor relies can be easily overthrown. This is that the verse under discussion is needed to complete the sentence begun with "Ay me!" of which Lycidas is the subject throughout. Therefore Lycidas continues to be the subject. But really Lycidas is the subject of dependent clauses, the main verb of the sentence having to be supplied (see note to l. 154), and practically l. 162 ends the sentence, the address to the Angel being a sudden break as complete as that in l. 154. St. Michael is, as Jerram urges, merely introduced parenthetically and not by name in ll. 161–62, but this is no reason why the poet should not break off the long descriptive passage

and address him. And after all the arguments *pro* and *con* have been weighed, one might come back to the obviously intentional verbal contrast of "looks toward" and "look backward," and rest the case for St. Michael there, although it might be further urged that there is greater imaginative power in an address to the Archangel than in one to the beatified Lycidas so soon to be apostrophized. But there is one convincing argument, which it is strange that Mr. Jerram of all other editors should have overlooked. As we shall soon see, he has correctly explained that l. 179 cannot refer to angelic hierarchies, but must refer to the "communion of saints." How then can he maintain that Lycidas is an *angel* here, simply on the score of the popular use of the word? Milton was too good a theologian to anticipate that deliciously heretical wish we utter whenever we sing, "I want to be an angel." Lycidas was bound to be a *saint*, not an *angel;* and it is instructive to note that Sannazaro, on whom Jerram relies, used the quite orthodox phrase "Elysios inter manes." The frequent use of "Saints" with reference to angels in *Paradise Lost* does not affect the argument, for the word is there used as a convenient designation of the loyal angels, and there was yet no race of mortals to recruit the ranks of the "Saints."

164. *Dolphins.* The reference is to the well-known story of the rescue of the Greek poet, Arion. When sailors with whom he was voyaging were about to rob him and cast him overboard, he obtained permission to sing his swan's song. The hard hearts of the pirates were not softened, but the dolphins, who had paused in their sports, were enchanted, and, swimming to his side, they supported him back to Corinth. It is needless to add that the wicked pirates were duly and fitly punished. See note to *Comus*, l. 48. Other stories of rescues performed by dolphins may be found in ancient writers. An English reference to the Arion legend, which suggests a comparison with the present passage, occurs in George Turberville's *Epitaphe* on Arthur Brooke, Shakspere's predecessor in treating the story of Romeo and Juliet, who died by shipwreck in 1563:

"Ay mee, that time, thou crooked dolphin where
Wast thou, Aryon's help and onely stay,
That safely him from sea to shore didst beare,
When Brooke was drown'd why was thou then away?"

Waft is generally used in connection with the wind. It has a very happy effect here. *Cf.* Tennyson's (*In Memoriam,* ix.) invocation to the "fair ship,"

"Spread thy full wings, and waft him o'er."

12

165–185. In these lines Milton, as is not infrequently the case in elegies, beatifies his friend, in a strain of poetry only slightly inferior to the magnificent passage that had just been concluded. Editors have compared the verses with similar beatifications in other elegies with no result save to emphasize by contrast the supreme and matchless beauty of Milton's achievement. A comparison with the closing lines of the *Epitaphium Damonis* is interesting, for this is to compare Milton with himself; a comparison with the closing lines of Moschus's *Elegy on Bion* is also interesting, for this is to compare Milton with one of the greatest of his masters, and to bring out sharply the difference between the classical and the Christian conceptions of death. The latter result is also brought out by a comparison of *Lycidas* with Propertius's *Elegy on Paetus*. *Cf.* with ll. 165–81 the following lines from Moschus'as translated by Mr. Lang: "Ah me, when the mallows wither in the garden, and the green parsley, and the curled tendrils of the anise, on a later day they live again, and spring in another year; but we men, we, the great and mighty, or wise, when once we have died, in hollow earth we sleep, gone down into silence; a right long, and endless, and unawakening sleep. And thou, too, in the earth wilt be lapped in silence, but the nymphs have thought good that the frog should eternally sing. Nay, him I would not envy, for 'tis no sweet song he singeth." *Cf.*, now, the preceding with the closing stanzas of Matthew Arnold's tender verses entitled *Geist's Grave*, and with the following lines from the same poet's *Thyrsis*, in memory of Arthur Hugh Clough:

"For there thine earth-forgetting eyelids keep
The morningless and unawakening sleep
Under the flowery oleanders pale."

165. Lay stresses as follows: "Weep nó more, woful shepherds, weep no móre" (Keightley, quoted by Browne). Note the repetition and compare the close of Spenser's eleventh *Eclogue* and the twelfth stanza of the *Doleful Lay of Clarinda*, included in the same poet's *Astrophel*.

166. *Your sorrow*, cause or object of your sorrow.

167. *Floor*. *Cf. level brine* of l. 98.

168. *Day-star*, the sun. Jerram thinks that Milton probably followed classical poets in confusing Lucifer and Hesperus, the morning and evening stars, as though they were one and the same planet performing the two services within the space of twelve hours. But we know that the sun is called the "diurnal star" by Milton (*Paradise Lost*, x., 1069) after classical authority, and the language of the passage fits the sun better than it does the morning-star; *e.g.*, "ore,"

"flames." Jerram, however, refers to passages in Homer and Virgil where the morning-star is described as "bathed" in the ocean, and he gives a passage from Giles Fletcher's *Christ's Victory*, iv., 89 *seq.*, in which the rising of the morning-star from the sea is described in language very like that employed by Milton. The matter must be left slightly in doubt; but the first nine verses of the lyric in *Comus* (l. 96) that begins

"The star that bids the shepherd fold"

will convince most readers that Milton meant the sun. Besides, in this connection one naturally thinks of such a scriptural passage as "But unto you that fear my name shall the sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings" (*Malachi* iv. 2).

169. *Anon* (in one), shortly. *Repairs*, either refreshes or renews.

170. *Tricks*, displays, sets in order. *Cf. Il Pens.*, l. 123. *New-spanglèd ore*, freshly sparkling metal, or rather freshly glittering gold. *Cf. Comus*, l. 1003. Addison in his paraphrase of the 19th Psalm has the phrase "spangled heavens." See Skeat.

172. *Sunk* and *mounted* are preterites, not participles. The "so" of this line has its "as" understood at the beginning of the description in ll. 168–71. The "so" of l. 168 connects this description with ll. 166–7.

173. See *Matthew* xiv. 22 *seq.* The reference is very appropriate in view of the way King perished. *Walked* is transitive. *Cf. Il Pens.*, l. 156.

174. *Where*, *i.e.*, mounted aloft to *where*, or to that place *where*. Note the repetition of *other*, and the position of *along*, which may convey the idea of moving, but probably means "amidst."

175. *Nectar.* See note to *Comus*, l. 480. *Oozy*, slimed by the mud at the bottom of the sea. *Cf. Nat. Ode*, l. 124; *Paradise Lost*, vii., 303. *Laves*, washes. *Cf. lavers*, *Comus*, l. 838 and note.

176. *Unexpressive*, inexpressible. *Cf. Nat. Ode*, l. 116. The Elizabethans frequently used adjectives in *-ive* where we should expect *-ible* or *-able*. See Abbott, §3. *Nuptial Song.* See *Rev.* xix. 6, 7, the song being that sung at the marriage-feast of the Lamb, to which all true believers are invited. Warton aptly cites from Milton's Latin poem *Ad Patrem*, l. 37:

"Immortale melos et *inenarrabile* carmen."

The mixture of classical and Christian imagery in these lines need concern us little, for the art displayed in them is supreme, and the idea of mixture is at the root of all anthropomorphism.

177. *Kingdoms meek* may mean, as some hold, "abodes of the meek" (this can have no reference to *Matthew* v. 5, for there the "meek"

are to "inherit the earth"), but there seems to be no reason why it should not be taken as about equivalent to "peaceful."

179. Some editors take this line to refer to the angelic hierarchies or orders that play an important part in *Paradise Lost*. But the use of "Saints" inclines me to agree with Jerram that the idea is rather an exquisitely poetical and concrete rendering of the doctrine implied in the phrase, "communion of saints."

181. A scriptural idea. See *Rev.* vii. 17, xxi. 4; *Isaiah* xxv. 8.

182. *Cf.* l. 165.

183. *Genius.* See note to *Il Pens.*, l. 154. The idea of the drowned person's becoming a guardian spirit of the place where he met his fate, so that he might warn off future voyagers, was common in ancient times (see note to *Comus*, l. 868, as to Melicertes), and would naturally suggest itself to Milton as a proper close to his monody. He was probably not aware that literal-minded commentators would dog his footsteps, and when they could no longer follow his swift transitions, bay at him. Why the poet could not appropriately leave Lycidas among the saints and come back to the sorrowing shepherds on earth with the comforting assurance that their deceased brother would not merely enjoy the bliss of heaven, but would also perform friendly services to mortals below, passes my comprehension. I should have thought it a most obviously fitting close for a noble elegy, had I not read so many sorrowful editorial ejaculations about the mixture of pagan and Christian imagery. After all, Milton would have the distinguished support of Sannazaro in this matter (*Eclogue* i., quoted by Jerram and Browne) if he needed the support of any mortal man.

184. *In thy large recompense, i.e.*, as a great recompense to thee for all thou hast undergone. King, having intended to become a clergyman, would feel it a real recompense to be allowed to serve his fellow-men in the capacity of a guardian spirit.

185. *Perilous* is dissyllabic.

186–193. This passage forms an epilogue to the monody proper. It gives us a perfect stanza in *ottava rima* (rhyming a, b, a, b, a, b, c, c), the metrical form being changed to emphasize the fact that the "uncouth swain" is no longer singing, but is being himself described in language that for picturesqueness and beauty is not often excelled in the elegy proper.

186. *Uncouth.* See note to *L'Alleg.*, l. 5. It may possibly be equivalent to "homely" here, but it probably refers to the fact that Milton was still young and "unknown."

187. An exquisite line. *Cf. Paradise Regained*, iv., 426–7:

> "till Morning fair
> Came forth with pilgrim steps, in amice gray."

Cf. also *Comus*, l. 188. The shepherd is, of course, represented as beginning at dawn and singing through the whole day—the intensity of his grief being measured by the fact that he neglects his flock for so long a period.

188. *Tender*, because used for the "tender" elegy. *Stops.* See note to *Comus*, l. 345. *Various quills.* "Quill" is literally a *reed*, its use as a bird's feather being probably secondary. See Skeat. *Various* is generally taken to refer to the variety of strains or "moods" in the elegy itself.

189. *Doric lay*, pastoral song. Theocritus and Bion wrote in the Doric dialect, as Moschus affirmed when he sang of the latter, "with Bion song too has died, and perished hath the Dorian minstrelsy." Syracuse, where Theocritus flourished, and whence pastoral poetry came, was of Dorian origin, which may account for the phrase as well as the reason cited above. *Thought* is probably used here in the sense of "care" (Bell).

190. *Stretched out all the hills*, an imaginative way of saying that the shadows of the hills had been lengthened as the sun sank low. *Cf.* Virgil, *Ecl.* i., 84:

> "Majoresque cadunt altis de montibus umbræ."

192. *Twitched,* etc. "Drew tightly around him on account of suddenly finding the evening chill," is a better explanation of this expression than "snatched up his mantle from where it lay beside him," as some editors have understood it to mean. *Blue* is said by Professor Hales to be the proper color for a shepherd's dress; but Mr. Verity and other scholars seem to think the bulk of evidence is in favor of *gray*.

193. It is not unlikely that there is a reference in the last verse to Milton's own intentions of giving himself up to other and more serious work, or of undertaking the Italian journey, but there is no need to press the point. The line without any inward significance forms a natural close to the epilogue. *Cf.* Phineas Fletcher's, "*Purple Island*," and note the difference in style :

> "Home then, my lambs ; the falling drops eschew ;
> To-morrow shall ye feast in pastures new."

It is impossible not to regret that Milton should have kept his promise. A return to the "woods and pastures" where *Lycidas* was sung would have meant a happier Milton, and two "high-water marks of English poesy."

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